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THE FUTURE OF DOGMA IN A LIBERAL SOCIETY

GEDDES MACGREGOR
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IT HAS FOR LONG been fashionable in theological circles to affect to disparage nineteenth-century liberalism in religion. This disparagement is not wrong because it is fashionable. It may, however, even for so slight a reason, be mildly suspect; nor is the suspicion diminished when the dogmatism of the detractors is discovered. No intelligent person likes dogmatism; no intelligent person ever did. The world at large, which is not and never was conspicuously religious in its outlook, and is, therefore, much inclined to oversimplify its thinking about religion, tends to interpret the contemporary scene as exhibiting just the kind of resurgence of dogmatism that might have been expected. Religion, such people suppose, is and always must be dogmatic in the worst possible sense of this term. Because it is so dogmatic, it is therefore illiberal and even obscurantist. The day is at hand, the exponents of this view affirm, with some prophetic zest, not to say relish, when religion will disappear, giving place to a more scientific spirit, a more empirical mode of thought. The day is not far off, they hint darkly, when religion will be so far removed from the contemporary scene that every good university will include it in its calendar as one of the subjects common to the departments of history and archeology, and no one will find such a practice any longer fraught with the slightest danger to liberal traditions.

But though this view is widespread among those whose lack of interest in religion makes it possible for them to hold it, it is not shared by all of these. There are some among the large class in question who remind the others of the notable cathartic or psychotherapeutic effects of certain kinds of religious experience, particularly those kinds attended by lavish display of emotion. There is little enough scope for the right guidance of emotion in modern life, they point out, and the more scientific we become, the less opportunity may be available for letting off potentially dangerous emotion, that is to say, emotion which might be directed to undesirable ends such as war. Religion should,

therefore, be preserved as a safety-device. Since the day is passed for fearing it, let us, with scientific dispassionateness, use it. The more enlightened people become the less they will believe religious dogma, and it should not be long before nobody believes any such dogma; nevertheless, let all be encouraged to keep religion as a pleasant form of exercise. The conditions in which the exercise may be performed will doubtless be improved with the scientific advances which are being made in every field of human activity; but it will be still a sort of "going to church." Worship will be healthier; but there is no reason why people should not go on singing the old hymns, even if they sing them in sun-suits at the seashore, so long as they do not believe any dogma expressed in them. If people like ritual, let them have the ritual of their religion. If they dislike ritual, preferring the silence of a meeting-house, let them have that; for may not it be beneficial for the one to have an hour of quiet just as it is beneficial for the other to have an hour of bowing and bobbing? Let all follow their predilections; what suits some will not suit others; some prefer tennis, others golf; some Anglicanism, others the Salvation Army. What does it matter, so long as you do not believe anything? Those who are emancipated from the fetters of religious dogma should feel free to enjoy religious emotion.

On the whole, the religious consciousness which contemporary theologians express perceives clearly enough that both these views of the people who decry religious dogmatism are quite unacceptable. What it does not always recognize is that these views are not at all as liberal as they look; on the contrary they are often highly dogmatic. Is it then simply a question of one dogmatism against another? Since it would seem that we must be dogmatic one way or another, is the choice between being a religious dogmatist and a non-religious one? Is not even the professing agnostic generally as dogmatic as any one about the necessity of being agnostic about religion? The nineteenth-century attitude to religion would seem to have failed, being no longer taken seriously in either camp.

I do not propose to defend the typical outlook of the religious liberal of the nineteenth century. He usually thought that by believing a little less he could compromise with those who believed nothing at all, and, perhaps, gradually win them round in some measure to his point of view. Such a view is based on a highly dogmatic position which, to say the least, may be fallacious. It is hardly less *simpliste* than suppos-

ing that by drinking a little one may persuade a drunkard to be a little less extreme in his habits. In religion, the so-called liberalism which is ready to compromise about its creed is worthless. A vigorous religion is more ready for martyrdom than for compromise about its faith. Nevertheless, though the *outlook* of the nineteenth-century liberal in religion be untenable, his *ideal* may be commendable, as I think it certainly is. It seems plain, indeed, that unless the ideal of religious liberalism be somehow realized, religion, as we have understood the term for many centuries of western civilization, will cease to exercise any wide influence at all over the minds of men and women. The Roman Church, no less than any other, has been shown to be powerless in face of any strong, secular, modern state. She displays some advantages over other branches of the Christian Church, by reason of her international character and closely knit organization; she enjoys an immense advantage, parallels to which are not unknown elsewhere, in the fact that her faithful really believe what she teaches and are frequently prepared to take even the bitterest consequences of such belief; yet her reputation for being more dogmatic than are many other branches of the Church seems to avail her nothing when there is question, as there often is, of a struggle for the survival of spiritual aims in the midst of a secular society. But how is the glorious vision, which lay behind the nineteenth-century outlook so rightly deprecated, to be fulfilled? How are we to have a religion that is both vigorous, zealous, uncompromising, even militant, on the one hand, and yet, on the other, open-minded, generous, intellectually honest, genuinely liberal in the fullest sense of this word?

Dogmatism has never been peculiar to religion. Rather is it a general defect of the mass of mankind, just as is sensuality, vulgarity, or pride. To expect that everybody should be liberally minded is like expecting that everybody should be intelligent or morally sensitive. No one has ever successfully run any very large society of human beings on such assumptions, though the finest human societies have generally been run by men who were themselves of a lively liberal mind. But to be so minded is not to have no dogmas; on the contrary, it implies a dogma. One can no more escape dogma than one can escape imagination or vision. Indeed, etymologically, "dogma" comes from the Greek word δόκημα, a vision or fancy, an opinion or expectation. It is no less and no more respectable than such words. It is one thing to say, "Let me show

you my vision: isn't it wonderful?"; and another to say, "If you don't see my vision I will knock you down." It is one thing to defend an opinion with all one's might; another to attack everybody who will not share it with you. So we have "dogmatism" in a pejorative sense; but that is not to say that we must avoid having dogmas. One might as well affirm that because intellectualism is a bad thing we must have nothing to do with the intellect, or that because moralistic people are tiresome we must try our best to have no morals. We cannot and we need not want to get away from dogmas; but we can and should fill our dogmas with a liberal rather than an illiberal content.

This demands some illustration. It has generally been supposed by the majority of people that, while some statements may be said to be allegorically true or analogically true, others may be said to be simply true—or false. This latter kind of truth naturally seemed more perfect than any other kind could be. That the rainbow could be in the imagination of a poet "God's bow in the clouds" was a pretty conceit, and as such it might be said, without overstraining language, to "contain" or "reveal" a little glimmer, a quick flash, of "truth." But how much better, it seemed, were the rainbow "in fact" a bow which was actually placed in the sky on certain occasions by God, with his own hand. And, argued those who thought thus and were brought up to love their Bible, did not God say it was so? Was God a deceiver? Would he say something which was only half- or quarter-true? When textual criticism showed how one must modify any such attitude to the Bible, however reverently one was disposed to these documents, people who held such views were disturbed. Still, though it meant more learning, it meant only this: if one could get at the "true" text all would be well, and one could know, then, exactly what God said and know it to be "true." But scholars were not satisfied with textual criticism. The Bible, however inspired, was a literary document, and as such it must be subject to literary exegesis, even if the exegetical work were done, so to speak, reverently kneeling. When the fruits of such scholarship seemed to make it necessary to reject as "only allegorical" many passages in the Bible which piety had for long treasured, many devout persons took fright. There are still a good many people who would regard as spurious the Christian profession of those who regard as "only allegorical" a very large number of biblical utterances. They are right, logically, if they are devout believers and, at the same time, hold the theory of truth that I have delineated.

But they are wrong in holding such a theory; nor is there anything pious about holding it. It was just as wrong a theory when scientists held it as it was when theologians did; and it is still just as wrong when the man in the street holds it about the objects of natural science as it is when he holds it about the object of Christian experience. Truth is not a kind of precious ointment which comes in a somewhat adulterated form in poetry and the like, but in a sealed and guaranteed package from God or the scientists. No one who has ever been imbued with the genuine scientific spirit has been able to take such a *simpliste* view, of course; but people looking at the *results* of scientific investigation have often been misled into looking at things in such a way. And I think that no deeply religious people have ever been misled either, though many who have listened at the foot of the mount to the prophet who has ascended it have not unnaturally fallen into the error of thinking that unless God sends truth wrapped up and sealed and guaranteed, then either he is a deceiver or else we must be agnostic about him altogether.

I am suggesting that such a view on the part of people who want to maintain belief and trust in God, and who want to love him in response to what they believe to be his love, shows less appreciation of God than they might suppose; even that it is, perhaps unwittingly, blasphemous. For it would seem that they are thinking of truth as a principle so immutable and beyond all being that even God himself is somehow *subject* to it. Such a view is, of course, not genuinely theocentric. The view on which the old-fashioned scriptural fundamentalism is based, far from exalting God, belittled him, setting up above him a criterion of truth to which he might be expected to conform and to which his revelations should correspond. But, of course, the revelations of God, whatever they may be, can correspond to nothing but God, who is, if the Christian account of him be trustworthy, anything else other than an abstract principle such as truth so conceived.

A thoroughly philosophic account of the nature of Christian truth has still to be worked out, but one may prognosticate that it will exclude all bibliolatrous and kindred attitudes to revelation. It will also exhibit as untenable every notion of dogma as something in propositional form which is supposed to be the representation of a "fact" to which the proposition is expected to correspond. To talk as though taking a doctrinal proposition literally were a conspicuously pious act is, on the contrary, a conspicuously impious way of talking. It is not

more, but less, reverent to affirm that in view of the words of the Creed, "He descended into hell," we must believe that this region is located below the earth, or that the words, "He ascended into heaven," require us to suppose that heaven is to be reached by means of a vertical movement from the surface of the earth. It is not only unnecessary but surely impious to suppose that the sincere affirmation of the Apostles' Creed demands a belief that the universe is made up of a series of floors, with the wicked in the basement and God in the attic.

Every "true" credal statement or proposition about God must conceal as well as reveal him. This is not at all surprising, since there is no proposition about even me which, though it reveal me does not also conceal me. Nor does even a photograph which is, as we say, a "speaking likeness," fail to conceal as well as reveal me. Even were I the most consummate artist, I could not express myself so perfectly as to reveal myself completely. It is orthodox Christian doctrine that God has, indeed, so perfectly expressed himself in the person of Christ; that is to say, he has so expressed himself completely and finally in the manner perfectly suited to all human situations. But, nevertheless, humanity has itself set up a barrier which makes it difficult for it to see God even when he is present in the flesh. So the Johannine observation: "he came unto his own and his own received him not." And there are many legends of the Christ appearing in the form of a child or traveller or casual guest, of his being entertained by humanity unawares, as Abraham so entertained angels, according to the old Hebrew story. There have been many fanciful but none the less aesthetically convincing accounts of what would happen if Christ walked in the streets of London or Chicago or New York. Would humanity recognize him were he to speak in the Assembly of the United Nations? Would the chance of his being recognized at one of our supper-parties be any greater than at one two thousand years ago in Galilee? If it is so obvious to the religious consciousness that God can be concealed from us even when he reveals himself in plenitude as a living man whom we can see with our physical eyes and hear with the same ears that attend to the voice of our own father or mother, it should hardly be surprising that every doctrinal, that is, dogmatic, proposition about him must very much conceal him.

But the remedy is not that we should eschew all dogmatic utterance about God as though a blank could reveal him better than anything that can be said. There is, indeed, no such blank. If no dogma about

God is available, we shall unwittingly fill the blank ourselves as soon as we think about God at all. The remedy is, rather, to recognize the limitation which any propositional utterance necessarily imposes on the revelation of any truth. In spite of certain advantages peculiar to verbal utterance, this is fundamentally subject to the same kind of limitation as statues and pictures and music; it must always be a barrier as well as a revelation. Indeed, the recognition of this finds expression in the very peculiar restrictions which are self-imposed by all genuinely religious users of any artistic medium for the presentation of religious truth. The Byzantine two-dimensional restriction is an example which springs readily to mind; in a Greek Orthodox church statues are forbidden while ikons abound. But all religious art has some such restrictions, salutary reminders of the immensely important circumstance that the worshipper is confronted by something which is concealment as well as revelation. The manner in which words are handled, the use of archaic language, for example, testifies to such a consciousness on the part of the religious worshipper. How much better, how much more sincere and natural, it is often suggested, that religion should talk a thoroughly vernacular tongue, the language of street and market. But, it is hardly less often forgotten, how misleading. It is one thing for worship to be in a language "understanded of the people," as the English Reformers wished; it is another that it should be in a language so familiar that it is only with great difficulty that the people can remember that anything unusual is happening, and if nothing unusual is happening in worship it is better not called worship at all. For the liturgy's quaint turn of speech, and, indeed, even a preacher's stutter, may witness to the immense inadequacy of language for so great a purpose as the revelation of God. They should remind the worshiper of the impossibility of enshrining God in any form of words, however necessary it may be, psychologically, that he should use these. Better that the words be Latin or Sanskrit than that one should be in danger of forgetting that, by reason of the familiarity of the vernacular. But better still that the language be both understood and yet, at the same time, fully recognized to be inadequate. Nevertheless, to suppose that we should not even try to put God into words, into dogmatic, propositional form, since the task is radically an impossible one, is surely like supposing that since to succeed completely in the imitation of Christ

would mean that we were God, a blasphemous notion, we should scrupulously avoid trying to imitate him.

Since dogma is inescapable and at the same time dangerous, what is to be done? Plainly, to reduce the danger. But what precisely *is* the danger? The answer to this needs more exposition. It cannot be too much stressed that the religious outlook is by no means more dogmatic than any other. Every outlook is dogmatic to the extent that it is an outlook at all. Not only is the so-called "secular" outlook of the present day as dogmatic as any present-day religious outlook; it is vehemently dogmatic, and it is this not only implicitly; its intense dogmatism is accompanied by missionary zeal and evangelical fervor unsurpassed by the zeal and fervor of any religious missionary. Every outlook which is in the least unreligious is, to the extent that it is an outlook of any kind, inflamed with a passionate desire to proselytize. The technique of proselytizing may or may not be cleverer than that of the religious person; but the desire for converts is none the less strong. One cannot truly believe anything important without wishing to see the spread of one's belief. Even if one professes to believe that one should not ordinarily believe anything very strongly, one naturally feels a passionate desire that all the world should ordinarily believe nothing very strongly. Not only, then, should we be willing to have a good deal of healthy philosophical doubt about all dogmatic utterances; we ought also to be ready to recognize how much more dogmatic we are than we are ever likely to know. One chief danger connected with dogma is our proneness to fail to recognize our own.

But there is another danger. We are much inclined not to distinguish one kind of dogmatic utterance from another, and to lump them all together as though utterances were of two kinds, dogmatic and nondogmatic. Yet plainly there is an immense difference between an affirmation such as "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord," and an affirmation such as "I believe there are 150,000,000 people in the United States of America." There is a vast difference between saying, "There is a book on my desk" and "There is a God reigning above." If it turned out that the book was anywhere else in the world other than on my desk, the proposition in question would be properly said to be false. But if it turned out that God was indeed reigning, but not above, it would not make the slightest difference to the truth of the proposition

about God. Propositions which purport to exhibit or express religious truth purport also to be allegorical. They are supposed to be bearers of truth, and that they may bear also a great deal of falsehood does not in the least diminish their value. If someone gives me a sack containing a lot of rubbish as well as a hundred diamonds of the first water, I have no reason to complain. It may very well be, of course, that all propositions are of this character; that is a general question about the nature of language and truth which need not particularly concern us here. But even so, propositions purporting to express religious truth are fraught with a peculiar danger, since, unless their character is fully understood, they must always appear intolerably dogmatic in the pejorative sense of this term.

There can be no doubt that religion, not least Christianity, is undergoing very considerable changes in the present age. Yet I think that those who find that it seems to them to be undergoing fundamental changes are those who have never grasped at all the fundamental character of religion. The grandeur and wonder of religion is enhanced, not diminished, by recognizing the frailty of every human expression of it. I will take but one example to illustrate this point. Had one asked the most liberal of liberal nineteenth-century religious thinkers what he considered to be most opposed to Christianity, it is very likely that he would have said "materialism." Today we are not so sure. Today there are many who, having seen and tasted the bitter fruits of a too other-worldly type of religion masquerading as Christianity, would certainly not see the sort of opposition between Christianity and materialism that some of our fathers professed to see. And, indeed, if we look at twentieth-century movements which are accounted most antithetical to Christianity, we shall see that they are so accounted not for their materialism but rather for their mysticism; that is to say, far from being simply materialistic philosophies, they are too much the opposite to be tolerable to Christian faith. At any rate, it is certainly not the materialistic aspect of Nazism or Communism which is antithetical to Christianity, though such a materialistic aspect may be very antagonistic indeed to rival kinds of non-Christian mysticism. Materialism is even, I think it might be said, the one thing about such ideologies which is not in itself in the least un-Christian. This is the one point that Christianity and Communism have left to them in common. It may not be much to have in common, but it is, indeed, remarkable that it should be this. It

would have seemed to a nineteenth-century thinker more than remarkable; yet I am not regarding it as an extraordinary provocative statement today. It was not, even, materialism which made Victorianism vile in the eyes of Victorian reformers; rather was it the anti-Christian, Victorian mystical doctrine *about* materialism. Christian opinion (and what is this but Christian dogma with a more Christian title?) has not weakened in any way in recognizing that Christianity is not even other-worldly unless it is also something very much else; on the contrary it is plainly far stronger for recognizing this. In affirming that one cannot rightly be a Christian on Sundays only; in insisting that the Christian, to be worth his salt, must be spattered with the mud of politics; in proclaiming that wars and broken treaties and slums are not just social phenomena or economic or political problems but the urgent responsibility of everyone who names Christ as Lord; Christianity is certainly not acquiescing in the materialism of the world. Much more is it recognizing more fully the nature of worldly dogma. Yet in this it *appears* less dogmatic than it did when it was parading as other-worldly and anti-materialistic. In a sense it is more dogmatic, since its dogma has been enriched, not impoverished, here. I believe that all Christian dogma should be continually enriched in such a way and that, in being so enriched, it will be more vigorously dogmatic. But it will, at the same time, be making the word "dogma" more respectable; that is to say, it will be gradually removing the stigma that has been very rightly attached to the term.

If religious people were continually on the qui vive for opportunties so to enrich their dogma, their dogma would never deservedly have the pejorative sense that it does. In setting up dogma as something scarcely distinguishable from presupposition and prejudice, religion, far from strengthening its position, puts itself quite plainly on the side of the world, which has an abundance of such dogmas, and against Christ, who, if he has any religious significance at all, certainly has not. I am unable to take the pessimistic view of the future of Christianity that so many people whom I know to be earnest Christians are inclined to take. Christianity has never been as widespread a religion as our history-books naturally tend to make us believe. It is a commonplace to say that it has been used as a cloak for all manner of evil-doing, and a disguise for political aims. That it is no longer such a fashionable disguise ought to be a matter of rejoicing to everybody in general, and genuine Chris-

tians in particular. I believe that there is probably as much genuine Christianity in the world today as ever there was, to say the least. And I certainly do not suppose that such Christianity believes less dogma or is less dogmatically vigorous than it used to be; nor can I imagine that it will do so in the near or distant future. But I do believe that it will rethink more and more the nature of its dogmatic affirmations. It will become more and more aware of how much more is implied in Christian faith and dogma than mere affirmation. It will not affirm less and deny more. On the contrary, it will both deny and affirm more; that is to say, in deepening its doubts and making these more earnest, it will also believe more vigorously and have a richer faith, and, above all, it will love God in Christ with a deeper and richer love.

After all, when all is said, it is love that matters most in religion. Even the most intellectually minded do not remain Catholics or Quakers or Methodists or Anglicans simply because of the intellectual affirmations involved in being any one of these things; they remain because at heart they love the *koinonia* as they have found it. Objections to this statement spring readily to mind. Newman certainly continued to love the old-fashioned Anglicanism of his boyhood long after he had given his allegiance to Rome. But he loved Rome more. As Benson said of his own case, the Church of England was still his mother, and as his mother he still loved her; but the Church of Rome had become the mistress of his affections, and he loved her with a passion that was wholly irresistible. It is love that keeps people in a religious society the human defects of which are only too obvious. They feel that, in spite of its often ludicrous shortcomings, it is "all glorious within," because, they believe, the freight carried by the frail vessel which is the society heals all her cracks. In the last resort, then, the dogma above all dogmas is that God who is thus loved is not only lovable but infinitely worth loving, since, as the writer of the First Epistle of John has it, "he first loved us." Religious dogma is inseparable from such a response to divine love. Philosophically, it implies above all, a theory of value, and of God as Absolute Value; but this is philosophically inexplicable apart from faith and love.

The only society in which Christian dogma has no future is the totalitarian one. Totalitarianism is, I should go so far as to say, the only ideology which is quite antithetical to Christian faith, and it is this because of its radically different conception of the nature of dogma

It is to the extent that a society is in any respect moving towards totalitarianism that it is assuming a specifically anti-Christian attitude. This seems to me to be of immense importance in understanding the nature of Christian dogma and prognosticating its future in any society. The only kind of society in which Christian dogma has any future is a liberal society. But this is indeed a truism, because the very notion of a liberal society arises only under an influence which is essentially Christian. It arises from the Christian attitude to dogma, shared in some measure by all genuine religion, as a faith that implies *both* belief and doubt, because it not only reverently recognizes mystery but is on the qui vive for mystery which may be going unrecognized as such. It is because genuine religion is so specifically mystery-conscious that it is so antithetical to the totalitarian spirit. The religious fanatic who is dogmatic in the bad sense has no such deep awareness of mystery, and even the scientist who is acutely skeptical about religion may be far more genuinely religious, so long as he is profoundly aware of mystery, than is any such fanatic. It is only to the extent that the scientist has an underlying fanaticism of his own, about which he may be unaware, that he is an antagonist of religion. Everyone is prone to such fanaticism, and the only safeguard against it is genuine religion. I believe that it is only the influence of genuine religion, with its doubt-sifted faith and, above all, its most delicate awareness of mystery, that is saving the world from the wholly disastrous consequences of rival fanaticisms, all of which, whether they are open about it or not, are plainly totalitarian in spirit. They are afraid of facing mystery, and their spirit is to find a way of escaping this. It is because the heart of the genuine Christian is so full of the love of God that his mind is never able to be dogmatic in any such totalitarian sense.

But he must be dogmatic in his own way; only his dogma is richer, being tinged through and through with a deep sense of mystery. He is never certain of his dogmas in the way in which the world is certain of its dogmas. I think it is very questionable whether there is anything to choose between that kind of so-called skeptic, really a dogmatist in disguise, who categorically repudiates, say, belief in the Resurrection of Christ, and that unfortunately not uncommon type of so-called religious person who insists on believing it and affirming it as though it were as easy to believe and affirm as it is to believe and affirm toothache. The genuine Christian is never sure *in that way*. He is

always aware of mystery. The fundamental test of the genuineness of anyone's religious disposition is not so much, "Do you believe that Christ rose from the dead?" as "Do you believe that there is a mystery here?" I believe that Christ is with those who have such a willingness to face mystery, and that the future of Christian dogma is entrusted to their reverent hands. I believe, too, that in such hands the ointment of Christ will be safe for the healing of the world, and that, in conformity with the traditional evangelical promise, even the gates of Hell shall not prevail against these hands. A Christian dogma is not something less than a vision; it is something more; it is a vision glimmering through mystery. And it is only in mystery that religious dogma ever had any future.

THE WORLD OF CHARITAS PIRKHEIMER

SIGMUND BEALE
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OUTWARDLY, PERHAPS, the chronicle of a devout nun of the sixteenth century might promise nothing more significant than material for an illiberal religious polemic. Indeed, the memoirs of Charitas Pirkheimer have been used by some Catholic writers in a narrow, partisan sense. Since their publication by Constantin Höfler in 1852,[1] at least one historian, Johannes Janssen, has brought forward parts of the account to help establish his own view of the Reformation as a blight upon civilization.[2]

As abbess of the convent of St. Clara in Nuremberg, Charitas suffered grievously as her way of life stood in the path of reform, and her unhappy story of adversity adds tellingly to Janssen's hypothesis. With evidence that compels in its touches of personal grief and poignant emotional conflict, Janssen is able to insist again and again that the century's religious upheaval represented a defection from the normal, righteous pattern of Christian life. But aside from such use, the memoirs of Charitas enable us to enlarge upon the canvas of Nuremberg life, to add to the sources a body of testimony which is valid and valuable, not because of its repertorial content but in spite of its emotional context. In the gentle quiet of her cloister, this woman of deep faith had labored and prayed in fulfillment of her duties to God. Peacefully and happily she spent her days in contemplation, in devotion to Franciscan ascetic ideals, but the impact of the Reformation was soon to shatter her peace, to tear her world from its appointed course. Charitas faced the wrath of a rebellious age in which sheltering nunnery walls seemed to offer but poor protection.

The intrepid nun, sister of the humanist Wilibald Pirkheimer, de-

1. Charitas Pirkheimer, *Der hochberühmten Charitas Pirkheimer, Aebtissin von S. Clara zu Nürnberg. Denkwürdigkeiten aus dem Reformationszeitalter,* edited by C. Höfler (Bamberg, 1852). "Quellensammlung für fränkische Geschichte," vol. IV, hereafter cited as Charitas, *Denk.* The memoirs have not appeared in English except for occasional passages in the translation of Janssen's fourth volume which I will not requote in the course of this paper. Cf. note 2 *infra.*

2. Johannes Janssen, *History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages,* vols. I-II trans. by M. A. Mitchell and A. M. Christie, vols. III-XVI by A. M. Christie (London, 1896-1925), 16 vols. Cf. especially IV, 64-84.

vout, yet more than aware of the secular learning of her age, was forced to turn every thought and effort towards the maintenance of her convent's integrity in the face of angry attack. But what can we tell of her faith, of Catholic orthodoxy, from the record she has left? What was her world like, and how was it re-formed by the outcries of her enemies? Can the memoirs be used to evalute her opposition, to judge the Reformation? Those brief years of revolution in Nuremberg, 1524 to 1528, were characterized by conflicting passions, unquenchable religious zeal, desire for personal aggrandizement, humanistic idealism, intrigue and calculation, genuine community interest, irrational hatreds, mass violence. The admixture is deliberate. The confusions in society were the confusions in monastic life, and a little of each can be found in the memoirs as Charitas describes a people torn between allegiances.

It is this story that I would like to reconstruct. The world of Charitas Pirkheimer was a part of Nuremberg largely ignored by Protestant historians and, at times, distorted by Catholics in an indictment of a whole society. Perhaps we will find that her Nuremberg was no other than that "quaint old town of toil and traffic"[3] where burghers once worked and dreamers dreamed and people died.

For a time at least, Charitas' world was a sheltered niche amid the flow of goods and gold and the clashing of arms that was the Empire at the close of the Middle Ages. In a period of hard-won security and relative peace, the people of sixteenth century Nuremberg enjoyed many advantages of stable, respected government. Fame and good fortune were theirs, and the burghers could turn to the cultivation of more expensive tastes, to a fuller life in religion and learning. "Patrician" concern with literature and art, the interest of the guildsmen in poetry and song, the many monastic houses within the city, all pointed to a wealthy, devout, literate, and appreciative people, to a culture that had long since emerged from a subsistence economy. The town's wide humanist circle, dominated by the personality of Wilibald Pirkheimer, younger brother of the abbess, extended the influence of Nuremberg letters throughout the breadth of the Empire. Wilibald, the scholar "whose name all Germany at that time pronounced with

3. "quaint old town of art and song." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "Nuremberg," *Germany* (Boston, 1877), I, 242. "Poems of Places," vol. XVII.

pride,"[4] the Tuchers, Lazarus Spengler, Conrad Celtes, and Christoph Scheurl remained in intimate contact with the leading currents of Western thought through their wide acquaintance with other intellectuals, with Erasmus, Reuchlin, Melanchthon, and Luther. The threads of Renaissance learning all passed through Nuremberg, there to be fingered, colored, and rewound by master weavers of European culture. More than a fair share of the pattern of northern humanism was designed in the little German town.[5]

As Charitas knew her, Nuremberg was a city of proud dwellings, of quiet charm, and impressive beauty. The sleepy, narrow river Pegnitz wound its way unconcernedly through the old town, its shores jealously crowded by high-gabled houses and jutting upper stories. Indeed, the flavor of the Renaissance still pervades those crooked old streets and contrasts sharply with imposing medieval reminders: the great churches of St. Sebald and St. Lorenz dominating opposite shores, the massive city walls and gates, the moats, the commanding castle of the Hohenzollern. In comparison, the unpretentious convent of St. Clara seemed lost among the alleyways and closely pressed houses of the burghers which push out against the city walls, only to spill over and repeat themselves on the far side.

For generations the Pirkheimers had lived in this flourishing, cosmopolitan community and had gained an eminent place in the hierarchy of the town's patrician families. Charitas, the eldest child among seven daughters and one son, was born March 21, 1466, and Wilibald's birth followed some four years later.[6] In many ways their father, Johann Pirkheimer, suggested the simple, early humanist, concerned with im-

4. Johann Döllinger, *Die Reformation* (2nd edition, Arnheim, 1853), I, 593.

5. Nuremberg, with a population of some 20,000, was actually one of the largest of German cities, Strassburg having about 16,000 people, Basel, 15,000, and Frankfurt-am-Main, about 10,000. There are, of course, no definite figures on medieval populations, and estimates vary widely. Compilations seem to agree on one fact, however, the relatively small size of sixteenth century German towns as compared with the great Italian commercial cities, Florence and Milan having some 80-100,000 in habitants. Cf. Emil Reicke, *Geschichte der Reichsstadt Nürnberg* (Nuremberg, 1896), p. 578.

6. "Charitas Pirkheimer" and "Wilibald Pirkheimer," *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. XXVI. Cf. also Wilhelm Loose, *Aus dem Leben der Charitas Pirkheimer—nach Briefen* (Dresden, 1870), pp. 2 f. In all, six of Johann Pirkheimer's daughters entered the Church. Several, like Charitas, became abbesses of their convents.

mediate needs of life and faith, and there can be little doubt that his experience was the instrument through which the Renaissance ethic left its impress on the children.

As far as is known, Charitas had no teacher other than her father until she was admitted to St. Clara in 1478, in her thirteenth year. Convent life brought her the stimulating interest of scholars like Conrad Celtes and Sixtus Tucher. Their correspondence with her indicates something of the influence of these humanists on the young girl's mind. Through their efforts she learned to read and to write Latin, to understand man in terms of the West's classical heritage, as well as in the light of Church teaching.

While Wilibald, in the family tradition of learning, traveled and studied in the universities of Italy, Charitas grew into womanhood in the bosom of the Church. The convent of St. Clara had long before won respect and support in Nuremberg as a place of refuge for daughters of patrician families. Every great Nuremberg name had its representatives among the sisters, for the convent's aristocratic tradition stemmed from its earliest days.[7] During the years of Charitas' service, children of the Ebners, the Nützels, the Tuchers, and the Tetzels, relatives of Spengler, Scheurl, Anton Kress, Albrecht Dürer, and of other honored families entered when they were thirteen, and after completing their education in about seven years, many chose to remain, to find honor, industry, and peace within monastic walls.

When Wilibald returned home from his Italian studies in 1495, he brought with him a love for the Latin classics, a smattering of Greek, and a humanistic idealism which was to lead him into conflict with authority: "I have no disciple or follower, and in turn I am no one's disciple; but whosoever has truth, him will I follow and on him will I depend."[8]

Firm bonds of love and understanding held this brother and sister together, as their letters indicate: "You are not only dear to me, most beloved Charitas, because you are my loving sister, sprung from the same parents, united to me by the most intimate bonds of nature, but

7. Johannes Kist, *Das Klarissenkloster in Nürnberg bis zum Beginn des sechszehnten Jahrhunderts* (Nuremberg, 1929), *passim.*

8. Wilibald Pirkheimer, *Bilibald Pirkheimers Schweizerkrieg und Ehrenhandel mit seinem Feinden zu Nürnberg,* edited by Ernst Münch (Basel, 1826), p. 249.

because alongside of your life's calling you devote yourself to studies and have a special longing for the humanities."[9]

In the following years, as Wilibald gained in stature as a savant and public figure, Charitas was able to cultivate and hold the friendship of many of the humanist's contemporaries. Celtes and Tucher remained her fast friends, liberal in their praise of her. In 1503 this kindly, learned woman, at the age of thirty-seven, became abbess of St. Clara, after twenty-five years of convent life. Yet her interest in letters did not diminish, and in a communication to Erasmus dated May 20, 1516, Wilibald could write:

> My two sisters send you greetings, one, the abbess of St. Clara, and the other, a member of the same order, who have your writings constantly in their hands. They are now most highly pleased with the *New Testament,* which extraordinarily touches these women, more learned than many men who imagine themselves wise. They would write to you, in Latin, if they did not think their letters unworthy.[10]

Events in her seclusion, however, did not keep pace with sentiment abroad. By 1517 an insistent voice was decrying Church abuse in Germany, a voice which gave cogent form to dissenting belief, and Nuremberg soon heard the demands of the Wittenberg reformer. But 1519 and the crowded years which followed saw vast embarrassment in the administration of the state. The Empire was faced with a contested election; the ravages of the Turks into the heart of Europe and the encroachments of the French only multiplied the distrust and uncertainty, while experimentation with new devices for centralized imperial authority created other problems. Chaos threatened Germany, and the reforming party in Nuremberg grasped at the chance to move more swiftly. The town council itself watched events with interest but acted with caution, since it was determined not to provoke disfavor with either side of the growing schism at too early a date. Theirs was an understandable reticence, a wish to see what alignments would be made before taking action that might prove rash, for the council was supreme in Nuremberg and its predominantly patrician membership felt a natural, paternal responsibility for the townsfolk.

9. Wilibald Pirkheimer, *Opera,* edited by Melchior Goldast (Frankfurt, 1610), p. 230.

10. Wilibald Pirkheimer, letter to Erasmus. "Epistle 409," *Erasmi Epistolae,* edited by P. S. Allen (Oxford, 1910), II, 239.

But in April of 1524, while the Imperial Diet was still in session at Nuremberg, the town's first treasurer, Anton Tucher, died.[11] It was then that the "practical, mild, intelligent Hieronymus Ebner and the crafty Caspar Nützel came to power."[12] With these officials was associated Lazarus Spengler, clerk of the council. Although holding no official place on the council itself and nominally only a scribe, Spengler has been called "in reality the author and director of all the decisions of the council."[13] This triumvirate, Ebner, Nützel, and Spengler, was able to dominate Nuremberg in its years of severest crisis, and it was they who charted the course of Lutheranism as it swept the Free Imperial City.

Charitas knew her opponents well, for the men who filled positions of leadership in the government were people she had known all her life. The Tuchers, Behaims, and Ebners, the Nützels, and the Geuders, family friends and relatives, would not be disposed to cruel or vindictive action. Fortunately for the nuns, the councilmen could never forget that these "children of Satan"[14] were their own daughters or sisters or nieces. Differences arose, but hatred and bigotry were left to irresponsible preachers and to the masses.

1524 was a year of tension in Nuremberg. The council decided on positive action, and in December the first Nuremberg monastery was persuaded to disband.[15] The Augustinians turned over their property to the council, and the monks laid aside their habit. Thereupon the battle was joined, and Charitas soon felt its full fury.

May it be known that that which had long been predicted of the time when we would record the year of our Lord 1524—the coming of a great flood through which everything upon the earth would be destroyed and overturned—had generally been understood to mean a torrent of water, but it was discovered in fact that Heaven did not respond with water at all, but rather with sorrowful fear, and need, and with a subsequent outpouring of blood; for in the aforementioned year, it so happened that through the new Lutheran teaching

11. The town treasurers, *Losunger,* were the chief officials of the council. Cf. Christoph Scheurl, "Epistel an Johann von Staupitz," 15 December 1516, which describes the workings of Nuremberg government. *Die Chroniken der fränkischen Städte* (Leipzig, 1872), vol. v, appendix A. "Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte," vol. XI.

12. Georg Ludewig, *Die Politik Nürnbergs im Zeitalter der Reformation* (Göttingen, 1893), p. 6.

13. Joachim Camerarius, *De vita Philippi Melanchthonis* (Halle, 1777), p. 101.

14. Charitas, *Denk.*, p. 4.

15. Ludewig, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

much has been destroyed, and many schisms have arisen in Christian belief. Ceremonies of the Church have been put aside, and specifically spiritual life has been crushed to the ground in many places, for now Christian *freedom* is being preached: the law of the Church and the faith of her servants are to count for nothing, and no one is to be held guilty for a denial of these things. Thereupon arose the many nuns and monks who have taken advantage of such freedom by rushing out of the monasteries, throwing aside their orders and habit, some marrying and doing just what they please. For reasons such as these we have suffered many adversities and attacks. . . . Many people from among the mighty and the wicked have visited their friends in our convent, preaching and speaking of the new teaching, and disputing incessantly over how damning and misleading convent life was and how impossible it was to be saved in it, for all of us were children of Satan.[16]

The first early victory of the reform group led to concerted efforts to abolish all of the city's monastic houses, and the Carthusians and Benedictines complied with council demands in the first part of 1525. It was the women's orders, the St. Katherina and St. Clara convents, however, which proved most difficult to handle, for they were determined to resist.

At the age of fifty-eight, then, Charitas undertook the fight to preserve the articles of her faith. Only in complete loyalty to the Church, in complete devotion to its teachings, could she feel her soul secure and her conscience untrammeled. All other considerations served to confuse the issue, since to her, doctrine was a question of absolutes, of black and white. Only in terms of "truth" and "falsehood," "good" and "evil," could she understand the battle as it centered around universality and the Church, and so in hopeful, tearful voice she pleaded for the preservation of her way of life. In 1524 Charitas wrote to the Nuremberg patrician, Hieronymus Ebner:

I beg of you, over and over, worthy, honored sir, as I humbly lay myself at your feet, that you concern yourself, even as we do, with the things for which Christ died. . . . If you had known and had been part of our convent as I have these forty-five years . . . you would more readily help us now. . . . Act as our true father and defender, to whom our convent is truly entrusted. Help to prevent the wolves, who might destroy or injure the vineyard of Christ, from coming among my dear lambs. My life must accomplish one thing: that these pious children, who serve God willingly and with joy and whom for twenty-one years I have reared in the love of Christ, be not misled against their will.[17]

16. Charitas, *Denk.*, pp. 3 f.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 7 f.

These desperate phrases speak out again and again through the memoirs. Simple, moving documents, the records of her difficulties as abbess of St. Clara express the fears and the hopes of a sensitive, finely wrought nature. "They are, in their way, a unique and lofty testimony, for the whole century, of sublime faith, pure piety, and Christian courage in the midst of a general decay of faith which has no parallel."[18]

If her words do not do quite all this, at least they show us a woman of character, for whom the timeless quests after personal salvation and philosophical freedom take on terrifying reality. Charitas clearly states her ever present concern with the need for consistency and justice (which for her, after all, meant universal, divine law) in pungently worded pleas addressed to the town council in 1525:

> Peasants and other people, in temporal affairs, are not permitted to commend themselves to lords other than those to whom they are born. In spiritual things our thoughts are governed in the same way. . . . That the spirit and the conscience might be free, we humbly beg you worthy sirs, our true lords and fathers . . . for the sake of the love of the Lord Jesus, who has cleansed our consciences of works of death with His costly blood sacrifice, do not force us in things which concern the mind, for it would be a wretched, pitiable thing if we were physically confined, to which we would willingly submit, and if our consciences were taken captive at a time when evangelical freedom was being preached.[19]

And again, in yet another appeal of that same year, Charitas asked:

> We beg of you, worthy sirs, for the love of our creator, Redeemer, and Savior, have patience with us poor children. Allow us to remain uncoerced in our beliefs, and do not intimidate anyone. We want daily to beg God from our hearts that He increase in us His true Christian faith. . . . The beliefs and the conscience of no man are to be intimidated, for God, our omnipotent Lord Himself, wills that the conscience be free and not forced. Therefore it is unfit that any man bind and confine it.[20]

There can be little doubt that, aside from sincere religious motivation, the consequent confiscations of Church property dwelt heavily on

18. Janssen, *op. cit.*, IV, 64, note 2. The first part of the statement (to the word "courage") seems to be a valid judgment. The last phrase, however, is typical of the author's exaggerated position and mars a work otherwise characterized by brilliant scholarship.

19. Charitas, *Denk.*, p. 47.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

the minds of Nuremberg leaders. But here again, Johannes Janssen describes the course of reform with characteristic overstatement:

> The reign of anarchy had already begun, and princes, nobles, and town councils could now without let or hindrance insult and revile God's holy sacrament and trample it underfoot, could destroy God's houses, could appropriate and devour the Church funds and alms, and could carry off the nuns from convents and outrage and dishonor them.[21]

It is true that a reign of anarchy had begun in some places, and, for Charitas, 1525 was a terrible year. She was naturally skeptical of the council's motives, for its actions seemed designed to fill empty pockets with the riches of the Church rather than to fill the hearts of the people with evangelical truth. The results of the disputation held in the council's chambers during that Easter of 1525 apparently confirmed her fears.

> All lay priests had to become citizens and pay heavy fees and taxes and had to conform in all things, just as other citizens. At the direction of the council, an inventory was made of all monasteries, listing all holy figures, church vessels and small objects, robes, mass vestments, and altar cloths. . . . Thereafter the abbot of St. Gilgen soon turned over his monastery with all its accompanying properties, also its books and clothing, which the council took into its own hands; the monks swore to uphold town law, and each one was taxed what he would get in a year, usually twenty-five gulden, but when he wanted to withdraw himself completely from the monastery and marry, he gave fifty or often two hundred gulden according to what he had brought (with him) to the monastery. Thereafter the monks discarded the robes of their orders, clothed themselves in worldly dress and in part quite expensively. . . . The same things were also done by the Augustinians, who were a cause of all this unhappiness; also by the Carmelites and the Carthusians. In all the monasteries a wild life and lack of any further order prevailed; each one did as he wished; they ate meat on the fast days and other holy days in these monasteries. Thereupon many monks ran out of all the monasteries and took wives. The preaching friars wanted very much to turn their house over to the authorities. They even pleaded to be allowed to do so but were rejected because they were too poor and did not have as much yearly income as the other monasteries. Monks sold all that they found of value and lived on the proceeds as long as they could, and in the remainder of the churches, all offerings, all alms, and bequests were taken and placed in a common fund.[22]

Charitas was not blind to the possible benefits of reform, but felt that

21. Janssen, *op. cit.*, IV, 55.
22. Charitas, *Denk.*, pp. 84 f.

radical innovations must be introduced by the mother Church itself, by the spiritual communities in Christ, and not imposed on the faithful by erratic, unlearned demagogues. In a supplication of 1525 she wrote:

> We hope that you worthy sirs, as understanding men, will not misconstrue the fact that in these tempestuous, schismatic times in which so many changes and new forms are being adopted, then discarded and altered again, we poor, simple women, who do not have much wisdom and cannot debate well and who are liable to be easily misled, wish to remain in the faith of the holy Christian Church and in the good, praiseworthy practices which may be preserved with the help of God, and that we do not want to be separated by any means from the universal Christian Church before the change-over is accepted by the spiritual communities and by some of the Christian Churches, before the things which are in doubt are set to rest.[23]

There were others who found the times trying. Wilibald and his generation of humanists were in a difficult position. More strongly impelled to radical action than the earlier rebels against medieval values, they still held to characteristic Renaissance demands, and these seemed to be met only in part by the call from Wittenberg. Nevertheless, Wilibald had turned in hope to Luther. He sought the religious purity of former ages in the evangel and found that the new teaching claimed a return to faith alone, to Scriptural exactitude, to complete freedom of individual conscience, to the authority of the earliest Fathers, to Augustine and Paul. But of all Reformation values, idealized devotional purity was as completely acceptable, indeed vital, to Charitas as it was to reformers, and, for this reason, Wilibald's early stand with the Lutherans had bewildered and hurt her deeply. Charitas could sympathize with his exaltation of the human mind, with his search for truth and for an honest expression of faith, but all these things were hers in St. Clara. She did not see the Church as a menacing extinguisher of learning, as a greedy monster destroying pure faith. Rather, she found peace and beauty there in company with the love and learning of a consoling Mother.

> We have the Old and the New Testaments just as you do outside. We read it by day and by night, in the Chapel and at the table, in Latin and in German, ordinarily, and as often as we wish. Therefore, by God's grace, we have no lack of the holy evangel. Yet I demand more of it: the evangel should be main-

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 47 f.

tained in life and fulfilled in works rather than talked about so freely but not at all realized in deeds. . . . I say that we wish to remain true to the text of the holy evangel, and that neither dead nor alive shall we be driven from it. But if we must take up an interpretation, I will surely accept the interpretation of the holy Christian Church's dear and sacred teaching than the explanations of a foreign intellect, rejected and scorned by the holy Church, preached by those who are nothing more than men, whose evangelical fruits are wholly unlike the fruits and the virtues of the beloved saints whom they reject. . . . Therefore we will in no way join with them, for it is easy to see that our sheltered convent would soon become an open house with everyone rushing in and out as he wished, that following this perverse freedom, everyone would do just what lust demanded and what pleased him. We will in no way allow this to be forced upon us. We do not wish anyone to be troubled or angered, but if anyone has a complaint against us, let him show us our error. We want only to better ourselves, for we recognize ourselves as transgressors, who do not do right in all things. . . . (We ask) that violence and injustice be not inflicted upon us, and that we be not coerced by those who are opposed to our piety and to our gentleness and honor, by those for whom our convent stands corrupt in spiritual and temporal things.[24]

As part of its program, the council decided that, for the good of their souls, the nuns should at least be exposed to the "truth." A series of Lutheran preachers was ordered to minister to the convent. Andreas Osiander, of the St. Lorenz Church, came to preach the new gospel and was followed by a stream of former Dominicans, Carthusians, and Augustinians. The motley crew, as Charitas saw them, failed to convert the sisters and managed only to incense their outraged feelings. Charitas felt particularly bitter towards these evangelists:

But in how unchristianlike a manner they forced Holy Scripture to strange meanings; how violently they overthrew the laws of the Church; how shamefully they discarded the holy mass and all ceremonies; how grossly they mocked and scorned all orders and the spiritual estate, excluding neither pope nor emperor . . . how coarsely and in unchristianlike manner they assailed us, against all precepts of brotherly love. . . . The preachers have spared no efforts to poison our minds, but the more they preached to us, the more we noticed with what sly falsehood and fallacy they were concerned. God, through His compassion, protect us further.[25]

That the sisters had real need for protection can hardly be denied. At the height of mass excitement in 1525, great crowds gathered in Nuremberg and, amid the noise and fighting, tried to sweep away the

24. Letter to her brother-in-law, Martin Geuder, 1524. Charitas, *Denk.*, pp. 8 ff.
25. *Ibid.*, pp. 70 f.

reminders of papism. The council was now riding on a crest of popular enthusiasm and would not be turned aside in its plans to complete the revolt.

> Oh, we were in great fear and need! By day and by night we were driven to conform, but we had banded together so that we would not be forced to give up the convent. We were told that we had not the power (to prevent it), that the convent was not ours since we had not built it. Daily they threatened to drive us out or to destroy or burn down the convent. Sometimes wicked boys ran around the buildings, threatened our peace, and even threatened to charge through the convent in the night, so that we remained in great fear and distress and slept little for fright. Even when it was completely peaceful in the city we worried daily about the riotous crowds which generally attacked priest and convent first. We were hated and held in disrepute and so vilely denounced up and down that we could not permit ourselves to be seen, even to purchase the essentials for our upkeep. We were considered far more shameful than the poor women of the streets. It was openly preached that we were worse than they. Our good friends would not visit us except in great fear and in secret, and those who did come scrutinized us to the bone, for the priests in all the pulpits were violently exclaiming over and over that no monastery or monkish garb should be tolerated. . . . Every day we received new threats which made us despondent, and every night we feared that it might be our last in the convent, for daily we heard the grievous and shocking stories of how the mob had destroyed so many monastic houses and had brutally deprived the poor innocents of all that they possessed.
>
> We had so much of this Easter joy between Easter Sunday and Pentecost that it would not surprise us if the marrow of our bones dried up![26]

But although conflict continued on the streets of Nuremberg, the hard-pressed nuns were not without friends. Opposed as he was to coercion and oppression, Wilibald was greatly troubled by the chaos of civil war, by Germany's political unrest and social rebellion. His concern was heightened by the difficulties of his sister and his two daughters, Crescentia and Katherina, who had also entered St. Clara,[27] and he prevailed on his friend, Philip Melanchthon, to aid their cause. The opinions of Pirkheimer and Melanchthon, that "pious, candid, upright man and lover of justice," as Charitas thought of him,[28] were persuasive enough to mitigate really harsh treatment of monks and nuns in Nuremberg. In November of 1525, and again in May of 1526,

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 85 f.
27. Friedrich Roth, *Wilibald Pirkheimer, ein Lebensbild* (Halle, 1887), p. 8.
28. Charitas, *Denk.*, p. 133.

during his visits to the city, Melanchthon used his influence in behalf of the beleaguered clergy.[29] Charitas was much impressed by his honesty and devout sincerity, and she was grateful for the aid he offered. Accompanied by Caspar Nützel, Melanchthon came to the convent to talk with its abbess.

> The provost came to the convent with Master Philip, who said many things of the new teachings, but when he heard that we base our grounds on the grace of God and not on our own works, he said we might win salvation as easily within the convent as out in the world if we do not insist on our dogmas alone. We agreed on each side of all issues. Only in the matter of doctrine were we unable to concur. . . . He was more modest in his speech than any Lutheran whom I have ever heard. It is against his nature to influence people forcefully. . . . I hope to God that this Lutheran man has been sent at the right time, for now it has been newly decided to drive us from the convent, to tear it down or to confine the old sisters who would not accept the new faith to a special convent and to force the young ones into the world. There were many evil blows directed at us which this Philip warded off.[30]

The gulf, then, that separated Catholic from Protestant was, perhaps, not the impassible barrier that it soon became. At least Melanchthon and Charitas Pirkheimer could find common ground, and they called it "faith." In faith could be seen Lutheran justification for the ways of man among the ordinances of God. Yet the faith of Charitas was not of a different nature. It, too, served to win redemption through the dispensation of love and through obedience to conscience. Faith and love, love and faith; this theme of the memoirs becomes a ritual, an obsession, constantly reiterated, constantly invoked. But could it be otherwise with a sister of St. Francis' beloved Clara of Assisi? What meaning would Charitas' world have had without justification by faith, without submission, without salvation?

> It matters not whether we suffer shame, outrage, or slander, for our Savior Christ has already suffered far more for us; His innocence for our guilt; His justice for our injustice. He is to be praised and honored so that He will come again . . . for He alone is the One whose grace and compassion are eternal. . . . God has endowed us with a rational soul which we gladly sacrifice to Him for happiness. We would even more gladly gain Heaven by the sweet rather than by the bitter path, if it were possible, but because the Lord Christ teaches us to take up our cross and follow Him, we are well content to remain in the state to which we are called, following in the teaching of St. Paul. Not

29. Ludewig, *op. cit.*, p. 45.
30. Charitas, *Denk.*, pp. 171 f.

that we build on works, for we know that a just Christian man's life is neither bound by time nor place, by food nor clothes, nor the like, but is free, not in the physical but in the spiritual freedom with which Christ has redeemed us. That the intentions and thoughts of the mind are not at all punished by Holy Scripture, but by man, is not our concern. Not man but God will judge, before whom all must appear and whose decision all must await. . . . Christ tells us we should condemn no one if we would not be condemned ourselves.[31]

Opposing every attack, the two Nuremberg convents became islands of orthodoxy in the sea of reform. As Nuremberg and surrounding areas embraced the evangel, the sisters of St. Katherina and St. Clara confounded their enemies by remaining adamant. Charitas became a symbol of resistance, an embarrassing block in the council's path. Since it was averse to violence, the council could do little but wait patiently for its program to take effect. The measures ordered were slowly throttling convent life as death visited the sisters and progressively reduced their number. Still the council continued to insist that no novices be accepted and made further attempts to persuade the remaining nuns to abandon their convents, but years passed with no change in their apparent obstinacy.[32]

The full effect of Charitas' determination is reflected in conversation with Councilman Caspar Nützel:

He said he had to speak to me alone. He led me to the choirstall and talked to me privately for a whole hour, using many soothing and even threatening words. He sought in every way to convince me and most urgently begged me to turn upon the right path. Thus I would be doing him and the entire council the greatest service, for they loved me so well and felt so friendly towards me. If they could only convert me to their views they would have the entire countryside. All the "prelates" in the monasteries had indicated a willingness to conform, but I alone was so inflexible and caused the convent to oppose its lords. If I would acquiesce and urge the convent to do likewise, he had no doubt that all the sisters would gladly follow. That was precisely the complaint against me; not only that I turned my own convent against its masters, but that all the surrounding convents, which all sought advice from me, reported that as

31. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

32. Charitas herself relates the story of one nun who insisted on going out into the world, much to the discomfort of her mother, who did not want to be burdened with her. *Denk.*, pp. 186 ff. On the other hand, Janssen makes much of the forced removal of three young girls by their parents. It is a pathetic story as told by Charitas and dramatically retold by Janssen, *op. cit.*, IV, 64-84, but his inferences do not necessarily follow. e.g., "It was not reform . . . that was being aimed at, but the complete overthrow of all existing institutions" *Ibid.*, p. 55.

I would do, so would they follow. Therefore, if I were converted, the entire land would be converted too. If, however, I persisted in this error, I would do great injury to my soul and would give cause for great bloodshed and turmoil. With many long, ponderous words he indicated how he was doing all these things because of his great love and out of a sense of duty.[33]

While the paths of sincere Christians on either side of the schism were being forced apart, many of the humanists felt that they had thrown off one tyranny only to have it replaced by another. By 1529 Wilibald became convinced that his allegiance belonged to the Church of Rome, and in a letter to his old friend, Kilian Leib, the prior of Rebdorf, he explained his position:

I do not deny that in the beginning Luther's enterprise did not appear entirely reprehensible to me, for no reasoning man could take pleasure in the many errors and artifices which had gradually infiltrated the Christian religion. I therefore hoped that for once these many disorders would be remedied, but I found myself sorely deceived, for before the earlier abuses had been extirpated, far more intolerable ones were introduced, in comparison with which the earlier were but trifles. I then began gradually to reclaim myself, and the more intently I observed everything, the clearer became the deceit of the old serpent, whose many temptations I too often have endured. For the most part I am now reviled as a traitor to evangelical truth because I take no pleasure in the—not evangelic, but rather—satanic freedom of the many apostates, men and women both, not to speak of the other innumerable iniquities which have almost destroyed all love and piety. But Luther, with his insolent, malicious tongue, in no way conceals what is in his mind, so that he seems either completely undone by illusion or guided by the unholy ghost.[34]

Wilibald's return to the Church embittered many of his former friends, although it must have strengthened Charitas' convictions and hope. In 1530 Wilibald died, leaving many to mourn and some to hate him, to denounce his shifts in religion, not caring to admit that he had tried to realize an ideal. The inconclusive and disheartening controversies with the council occupied Charitas for almost two years longer, until death overtook her in 1532, at the age of sixty-six.

Still her strength and the traditions she helped to establish carried the convent onward. Clara and Katherina Pirkheimer, her sister and

33. Charitas, *Denk.*, pp. 50 f.

34. Wilibald Pirkheimer, letter to Kilian Leib. Cf. Leib, *Briefwechsel und Diarien*, edited by Joseph Schlecht (Münster, 1909), pp. 11 f. "Reformationsgeschichtliche Studien und Texte," vol. VII.

niece, succeeded her as abbess,[35] but in a few years they too were gone, and by 1591 the last surviving nun in St. Clara had died. At last the council could claim complete victory. The monasteries were gone, the habited men and women were but memories, and the convent of St. Clara, only a name—until its doors were reopened to Catholic worship in 1857.[36]

If we can put aside for the moment attempts to document the Catholic argument or to justify either side in the religious controversy, then what remains to us of the memoirs of Charitas Pirkheimer is a portrait of social conflict and a delineation of personality. Charitas shows us the motives, the character, and the faith of human beings completely absorbed in their religion. It matters little that her beloved ideal was charged with having outlived its usefulness to society, for it is Charitas herself we would want to know, a nun in the time of Luther, yet hardly vile, worldly, and depraved for that reason. Hers was a full life, especially full for a nun, yet it reflected the sanctity and the calling which many must have felt in that turbulent age. The mechanics of social change are not nicely ordered determinants, and documents of one nature may be quickly countered by their opposites. What can be sought in the past, however, is a recreation of the social milieu, and these memoirs do suggest the flavor of Reformation Nuremberg, because they are a part of Reformation experience. We cannot prove Charitas right or wrong, but it should be enough to let that world breathe again as Charitas saw it.

35. Höfler, Appendix to Charitas, *Denk.*, p. 204.
36. "Charitas Pirkheimer," *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, vol. XXVI.

VITTORIA COLONNA: BETWEEN REFORMATION AND COUNTER-REFORMATION

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VITTORIA COLONNA was called "divine" already during her own lifetime. Michelangelo said of her that she was "a man—nay, a god in a woman."[1] This idealization of her was handed down uncritically by succeeding centuries, like an old ikon bequeathed by one generation to another, and hung in a corner of the house for pious veneration where nobody ever dusts it for fear that it will fall. But if it were dusted—what would be discovered? The features of a noble and pious princess, doubtless, but not those of the saint or genius which the flattering courtiers of the sixteenth century and the Italian patriots of the nineteenth century saw in her.

As daughter of Fabrizio Colonna, Gran-Conestabile of Naples, and as wife of the Marchese di Pescara, Vittoria owes her reputation primarily to her illustrious name, and to her connections with the most famous personalities of her age, especially Michelangelo. Her success as a poetess is linked with the taste of her age, because she mastered perfectly the Platonic-Petrarchan style then in fashion. A perusal of her numerous love-sonnets, however, leads one to doubt the sincerity of her admiration for her husband and of her mourning for a lost happiness. The suspicion is bound to arise that she tried deliberately to deceive the world in order to hold up to her lax contemporaries the model of a happy marriage (which, in reality, was far from being so) and to glorify as a hero her dead husband whose shortcomings she knew all too well. As Ariosto said of her:

> She not only makes herself immortal
> Through the grace of her style, the equal of which I
> have never heard,
> But she also lifts from the grave and immortalizes
> Every man of whom she speaks and writes.[2]

In almost every respect, however, Vittoria was surpassed by other

1. Carl Frey, *Die Dichtungen Michelangelos* (Berlin, 1897), Sonnet CXXXV.
2. Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, c. XXXVII, st. 16, vv. 5-8.

women: Veronica Gambara was a greater artist, Giulia Gonzaga exceeded her in beauty, Caterina Cibò, in knowledge—to name only Italian women of her time. Her first biographer, Filonico Alicarnasseo, who had known her personally, said of her: "The Marchesa, not being of great beauty, endeavored to display the gifts of her mind."[3] Nevertheless, her knowledge was less than is generally assumed; at any rate, it was intuitive rather than systematic. At best she knew some Latin, and she read much, mostly religious literature, until even this was forbidden her by her spiritual director, Cardinal Pole, with the injunction, "not to be too curious but to remain within the limits convenient to her sex."[4] The style of her letters is poor, either too bombastic or too clumsy. Her only prose work, *Il Pianto sopra la passione di Cristo*,[5] was composed only to a small extent by herself, and even here she shows no genuine thought.

This is not meant to deny her intelligence, but it should be emphasized that, in her personal life, the emotional element held sway over the rational one, since "it is suitable for women to have a heart more ardent."[6] The singularity and attractiveness of Vittoria were not due to this or that particular quality or talent, but to her rich harmonious personality. She combined everything in herself, blending perfectly a noble character, a profound soul, and a sensitive heart. In her love and her mourning—"although God dislikes love without measure"[7]—she was as excessive as she was later to be in works of penance. The serene tranquillity which radiated from her was often only a deception, for she had mastered the conventions of her society to perfection. But she confessed once to Cardinal Morone that she had kept "continuously her body in motion in order to find tranquillity and her mind in agitation in order to find peace."[8]

This inner restlessness betrays itself also in her traveling around far

3. *Carteggio di Vittoria Colonna,* ed. by E. Ferrero and G. Mueller (Turin, 1892), 2d ed., appendix, p. 317.

4. *Ibid.,* p. 340.

5. *Pianto della Marchesa di Pescara sopra la passione di Cristo* (1st ed. by Aldus, Venice, 1556).

6. *Rime di Vittoria Colonna,* ed. by Ercole Visconti (Rome, 1840), p. 317. All quotations from her poetry are taken from this, the only critical edition of which all later editions are only reprints.

7. *Ibid.,* p. 133.

8. *Carteggio,* p. 273.

more than was conventional for women in those times. Basically, she was not at all this self-reliant personality, this "column, high and firm in the tempest" who "hath conquered the world and herself," as Pietro Bembo and Annibale Caro sing of her.[9] On the contrary, she was easily influenced and had a strong desire for spiritual guidance. Not finding this support in her husband, she looked for it later in Fra Ochino and Cardinal Pole, and her nature led her spontaneously to the Christian ideals of humility and obedience. Her conscience and convictions always conformed to the opinions of her spiritual directors. This lack of critical judgment and independent action contrasts strangely with the admiration she received everywhere as model and leader, an admiration, however, which might be compared with the cult of a beautiful picture of the Madonna, a cult referred more to an ideal than to an individual. Those excessive ovations were quite in line with the fashion of her age and the aristocratic Renaissance society which celebrated her as the "uncrowned queen of Italy" and basked complacently in her verses.

Vittoria Colonna was outstanding neither in actions nor in sufferings. She distinguished herself not at all by an especially tragic or heroic life. The compassion which she received for the "untimely" loss of her husband (after sixteen years of marriage), for her childlessness, for the collapse of the old predominance of her house (caused by the "War of the Salt")—this exaggerated pity has faded away in our day when the conception and the limits of human suffering and tragedy have been shifted and enlarged to an unprecedented degree. The Marchesa never experienced humiliations, persecutions, poverty and hunger, though it seemed to her that she had passed her entire life shedding many bitter tears, and only a few sweet ones. It was easy for her to gain admiration and gratitude for her works of charity, because she simply had to give from her abundance, without lacking anything herself. It is true, however, that she experienced the bitter grief of loving without response, and all her life and art were molded by this suffering. But what she lacked in love of husband and children was abundantly compensated for by the friendship she found with all the great personalities of her age.

But we need no longer concern ourselves with the external history of

9. Also in: *Rime*, pp. 400, 410.

the Marchesa. Man is the only creature who has a double history: besides the history of his life, there is that of his soul. It is only the history of her soul which interests us in Vittoria Colonna, because it is precisely here that her historical importance lies; it is here only that she surpasses all the other women mentioned before. They represent only one or the other aspect of their age; Vittoria Colonna stands between two ages, and embodies a whole historical evolution.

At first she was a true offspring of the Renaissance. She represented this age in one of its most beautiful aspects: she was the ideal incarnation of the *nobildonna,* the lady of her feudalistic society. She combined nobility of birth with nobility of mind, noble dignity and serene grace with artistic taste and a humanistic background. She was introverted, and yet open to everything great, sublime, and beautiful. She loved the world with its splendor and its honors. Even though this world could not satisfy her fundamentally, she loved it, nevertheless, for the sake of her husband, this splendid and ambitious *condottiere,* on whom all her thinking and feeling were centered.

Then, with the historical development from the Renaissance to the Reformation, the Marchesa di Pescara felt increasingly the importance of the *unum necessarium* of the Gospel. The haughtiness of man detached from God collapsed, and the cult of beauty suddenly disappeared. In reaction to the optimism which characterized the Renaissance spirit, a return to the pessimistic side, the more ascetic tenor, of Christianity, began. This melancholy and pessimistic trait became manifest also in Vittoria Colonna when she closed one of her sonnets with the apodictic declaration: "All human hope is of glass."[10] The body suddenly became a burden to her:

> The soul felt this heavy and black
> Earthly prison in which it saw itself enclosed. . . .[11]

The world now seemed a deluge to her: "So that I, Sisters, who am lonely and deprived of all support, and living in a town which seems surrounded by a deluge deserve your compassion."[12] And yearning for death permeates her poems:

10. *Ibid.,* p. 165.
11. *Ibid.,* p. 292.
12. *Tre lettere inedite di Vittoria Colonna,* ed. by Abdelcader Salza (Florence, 1898), p. 5.

Tender is dying . . .
Sweet the change of these varying times
To the stable condition! O, when may be the dawn
Of so bright and adventurous a day![13]

The passionate appeal of the Reformers for a reform *in capite et in membris* struck Vittoria like an admonition to herself. It stirred up in her the hidden religious power of her soul and the desire for more perfect imitation of Christ:

With the cross I would like to walk behind the Lord
With long steps through the narrow and steep path.[14]

With the cross, the blood and the sweat,
With the spirit still more ardent in danger,
And not with a lazy will and slow action,
Must man serve his true Lord.[15]

This did not mean, however, a sudden conversion; there was no "Damascus experience" in her life. It was rather the logical development of a natural disposition than a heroic self-conquest after trying religious struggles. She had always been a believing Christian, like all women of her society, because faith was self-evident to her. But this faith was not a living, only an "educated" faith. She never had to search and struggle for the true religion; any doubt in the revelation of Christ was far from her. At most, she discussed the problems of Justification or Grace, and of the Holy Scripture. Nor did she ever show in her writings any trace of dogmatic skepticism. Vittoria was by nature essentially religious. Religiousness, however, is a natural disposition, like musical talent. Devotion, on the other hand, is a human achievement, a virtue. It may happen, therefore, that a religious person is not always devout, and a devout one not always fundamentally religious. Vittoria was both. She developed her religious disposition, gradually, into devotion. The more she overcame that world in which her love for her husband had imprisoned her, and the more her mourning waned, the more grew her genuine inclination to the contemplative and ascetic life, stimulated by the example of great saintly Christians

13. *Rime*, p. 350.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

and by the monastic life, which she shared with nuns in several convents. She developed her religious powers, even to the renunciation of all others, including the artistic, to the point even of reaching mystical ecstasy.[16] Claudio Tolomei said of her: "Being enraptured of Christ for so many years, she lived in the spirit rather than in the flesh."[17] But this did not prevent her from returning again and again to the reality of things when it was necessary to defend the Capuchin Order with daring energy before the Pope, to urge the Emperor to undertake a crusade, to prevent a military campaign against her brother, to resolve marital conflicts, or even to convert courtesans.

The biographers of past centuries saw the Marchesa only in her role of the greatest Italian poetess. Therefore, it was a notable step forward when her latest Italian biographer, Amy Bernardy, wrote: "The masterpiece of the Colonna is not her writing but her life."[18] But even this is not quite exact, as we have shown above. And it is still less justifiable to consider Vittoria's religious zeal simply as an "ambition to play a part in the controversies of ideology and ecclesiastical policy," to quote Alfons Nobel, in the most recent German biography of her.[19] Such a judgment shows the superficiality of his work, which completely neglects to treat her religious development or the old debated problem of her dogmatic position.

The greatness of Vittoria Colonna lies solely in her religious personality, in her moral perfection. She was surely not a great poetess, and probably not a real mystic, but she was a great Christian, one who, in spite of the splendor of her social position, possessed "This humility which makes men sublime,"[20] and proved with her life "How much a human heart is able to do through grace."[21]

Yet one question remains open. It is as if "the veil, which covers the heart of the poetess, woven of perfectly mastered convention,"[22] is on closer inspection drawn also over her soul. Why did she who strove for the Absolute, who intensified her devotion to mystic vision, who was

16. Cf. her sonnets, in *Rime*, pp. 182, 229 and Ms. Casanatense, No. 897, fol. 109 v.
17. *Vittoria Colonna*, Italia Francescana editrice (Rome, 1947), p. 38.
18. Amy Bernardy, *Vittoria Colonna* (Florence, 1927), p. 111.
19. Alfons Nobel, *Vittoria Colonna* (Recklinghausen, 1947), p. 159.
20. *Rime*, p. 203.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 280.
22. Henry Thode, *Michelangelo und das Ende der Renaissance* (Berlin, 1903), v. II, p. 361.

deeply permeated with the ideals of monastic life, who felt herself attracted by the charm of monastic solitude and of the *vita communis* with the "pure and sweet brides of Our Lord, who guard their troth, which God has given to them, internally as well as externally"[23]—why did she not follow her natural dispositions through to their logical conclusion and become a nun herself?

In the first days after the death of her husband, in 1525, she intended, indeed, to take the veil at once. At that time, a *breve* of Clemens VII prevented this unconsidered step, most probably upon the urging of Ascanio Colonna, who hoped to profit by marrying his sister again to his advantage.[24] So she left the convent after some weeks and returned to her castle on the island of Ischia. Ten years later, it was again rumored that the Marchesa wanted to retire to a convent in Naples which had been founded by an acquaintance of hers, Maria Lorenza Longa.[25] But, instead, she left Naples for good. In her last ten years she led an almost monastic life in the convents of Rome, Orvieto, Ferrara, Florence, and Viterbo. Even there, however, she maintained her princely way of life, surrounded by a real court of ladies-in-waiting and a suite of secretaries and assorted servants. She received visits and went out as often as she liked. It almost seemed as if the habit of the aristocratic ladies of that time to retire temporarily to a convent served her as a means of honorable escape from the molestations of social etiquette, with its rigor and monotony. Perhaps it was due to this worldly behavior that finally the nuns in Viterbo wished the Marchesa to depart from them and denounced her to the Inquisition.[26]

There is in Vittoria's behavior something of a compromise, an imperfection, almost a contradiction: she lived in convents, but she did not take the veil; she loved poverty, but maintained a princely household; she practiced obedience but did not bind herself by the vows. The *breve* of Pope Clement VII was not so irrevocable a prohibition that it could not have been circumvented by a woman of the house of Colonna. The entry of so famous a woman into a convent would have been a gain for the Church. Her friends, however, were glad to keep

23. *Carteggio,* p. 307.

24. Published by Ercole Visconti, p. CXLV.

25. Cf. letter of Agostino Gonzaga to the Marchesa di Mantova, in Alessandro Luzio, "Vittoria Colonna," *Rivista Storica Mantovana,* I (1885), p. 26.

26. Cf. *Compendium processuum Sancti Officii Romae,* in Carteggio, pp. 344-45.

her among them: "This noble lady serves the world more by her example than many others by preaching and studying,"[27] wrote Claudio Tolomei to the physician of the Marchesa. And Cardinal Bembo implored her in a sonnet not to abandon her friends entirely: ". . . without you/Who would be there to show us the path which leads to heaven?"[28]

But such a reasoning should not have restrained her from choosing the monastic life if she considered it to be the most perfect; neither does it seem probable that Vittoria would have lacked the strength to renounce her independence, had she been convinced of the necessity of such a sacrifice. Perhaps here, more than anywhere else in the life of the Marchesa, the new spirit of the Reformation can be observed—the desire to emancipate the ideal of Christian perfection from the monastery and to carry it into everyday civic life. Perhaps it is due to Fra Ochino that Vittoria chose that way of life which he had described in a conversation with Caterina Cibò as

> . . . so perfect that it is completely divine. There you do not need to change the place but the manners, the life but not the clothes; there you yourself cut off your bad desires and thoughts instead of your hair; you pray to God with the heart, not with the mouth; you obey God, not man; there you have to be chaste in heart and spirit without dependence upon things. In return, you have all virtues as your companions.[29]

The same ambiguity can be observed in the theological attitude of Vittoria Colonna—so it seems, at least, to the superficial observer. The Inquisitors thought her a bad Catholic, the Reformers considered her an inconsistent Protestant (like her friends Giulia Gonzaga and Renée de France), because, at the beginning, she took a stand neither in favor of nor against the Reformation. And even if she had been convinced of the truth of Protestantism, she hardly would have imitated the example of Isabella Bresegna or Olimpia Morata, who left Italy for the sake of their faith, for,

> She lacked the courage to face the last consequence. She did not even think about the possibility of such a repudiation of the Church. She belonged to the world from which not even men like Contarini wanted to part. The tradi-

27. Alfons Reumont, *Vittoria Colonna* (Turin, 1883), p. 252.
28. *Rime*, p. 419.
29. Bernardino Ochino, *Dialoghi sette*, in Roland Bainton, *Bernardino Ochino* (Florence, 1940), p. 46.

tion of her noble family and her intellectual formation bound her to the sphere of a culture to which the mere word "heresy" meant horror and the annihilation of all ideals.[30]

But is it true that the fatal year of 1542—thrice fatal for the death of Cardinal Contarini, the flight of Ochino, and the foundation of the Roman Inquisition—"broke Vittoria Colonna's heart," and that she made in this year the *sacrificium intellectus,* as is the opinion of her latest Protestant biographer, Wyss?[31] Such a sacrifice should be preceded, after all, by a conflict in the conscience, by an internal struggle, but there is no trace of this in her life or in her writings. There was, also, at that time, no rupture in her thought and no hypocrisy in her belief.

However, a critical investigation of the religious poetry of Vittoria Colonna leads to the discovery of some sentences with heretical overtones, those, for example, concerning the complete corruption of human nature,[32] the *sola fide* doctrine,[33] and the theory of the *iustitia imputata.*[34] In six famous sonnets she also complained vehemently about the Pope.[35] But even if some of her verses can be interpreted in a Protestant sense, they do not have any schismatic character. The Church always remained for her the "Bride of Christ" and "our true mother,"[36] the Pope "our earthly father,"[37] and "your good successor whom high reason elected directly."[38] Her sonnets in honor of the Eucharist as the Real Presence of the Flesh and Blood of Christ are inspired by a deep Catholic devotion.[39] This is proved, too, by her prayers for the intercession of the saints,[40] and especially in her two sonnets on the Immaculate Conception,[41] which had not yet been declared dogma and had always been repudiated by the Protestants. And though Vittoria liked to emphasize the vanity of all works,[42] she did so

30. Henry Thode, *op. cit.,* II, 378.
31. Johannes Wyss, *Vittoria Colonna* (Frauenfeld, 1916), pp. 119, 208.
32. *Rime,* pp. 193, 207, 266, 316, 333.
33. *Ibid.,* pp. 191, 318.
34. *Ibid.,* p. 318.
35. *Ibid.,* pp. 296-301.
36. *Ibid.,* p. 296.
37. *Ibid.,* p. 301.
38. *Ibid.,* p. 296.
39. *Ibid.,* pp. 223, 353, 354.
40. *Ibid.,* pp. 274, 277, 279, 347.
41. *Ibid.,* pp. 243-44.
42. *Ibid.,* pp. 229, 235, 302, 305.

out of Christian humility and not in order to approve the Protestant thesis. In other verses she spoke with the same fervor of the necessity of good works[43] and of their merit.[44] Her words arose spontaneously out of her religious experience and not out of dogmatic speculation. She really felt and lived the paradoxes of Christianity. It should be remembered, moreover, that there was a far-reaching dogmatic confusion in her age, since many dogmas of the Catholic Church had not yet been defined before the Council of Trent.

Not even the fact that the Marchesa prohibited a new printing of her poems in 1546, shortly before her death, supplies evidence for the thesis of Wyss.[45] For in these years the new age of the Counter-Reformation began, and Vittoria Colonna could not help feeling that a new spirit had arisen, alien to that of her poetry. Her lyrics on the Cross, her undogmatic devotion, the over-emphasis on Grace and Justification by Faith—these were principles so close to those of the Reformation that they were no longer suited to the new age. She grew silent, not so much from opportunism as because she clearly understood it would be in vain for her to oppose the new, dominant spirit. Therefore, a further publication was of no use.

But perhaps this sudden silence had a still deeper meaning? It may be that the poetess had reached, in her religious life, that degree of perfection in which speech and writing are dissolved into the silence of adoration and beatific vision: *Silentium meum loquitur tibi.*[46]

There is, however, still another argument which speaks in favor of Wyss's thesis, namely, Vittoria's connections with famous Protestants, above all with Bernardino Ochino. Not only did many Protestants consider her a secret fellow believer, but the Roman Inquisition came to regard her as such—fortunately too late to burn her alive. In the index of their registers her name is mentioned several times in connection with the trials against Morone, Pole, and Carnesecchi. This does not prove anything, since even men like these three were not free from denunciations, calumniations, and suspicions. However, even the supercritical Inquisition did not dare to declare the Colonna princess a heretic, but

43. *Ibid.*, pp. 170, 212, 303.

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 183, 228.

45. Cf. letter of Donato Rullo to Ascanio Colonna in Domenico Tordi, *Il codice appartenuto a Margherita d'Angoulême, regina di Navarra* (Pistoia, 1900), p. 4.

46. *Imitatio Christi*, III, 21, 4.

merely "an accomplice of heretics . . . imbued with the false doctrine of the cardinal and therefore his admirer *(amator)*. . . . The Marchesa gave money from her revenues to Pole for the heretics as well as for the subversion of the faithful."[47]

How far, then, was she "an accomplice of heretics"? As a matter of fact, the Marchesa had been the most efficient protector of Fra Ochino, for he it was who, by the holiness of his monastic life and the power of his preaching, had drawn the Marchesa out of her widow's mourning and introduced her to the problems of the Reformation. Under his influence she might have lost her Catholic faith, had not Cardinal Pole saved her, as she confessed in a letter to Cardinal Morone: "If Your most reverend Lordship would have seen the chaos of ignorance in which I was, and the labyrinth of errors, wherein I promenaded securely. . . . But God willed that through him (*sc.*, Pole) He should say *fiat lux* and show me to be nothing myself and to find everything in Christ."[48] These and many other words of the poetess (cf. also Carnesecchi's statement, p. 157) refute Nicolini's assertion that "the early stages of the above mentioned spiritual relations to Ochino were a most happy period of peace for Vittoria," and that, in her relations to Pole, "she did not find any more this serene peace. . . . Never had she felt so peaceful as when she adhered to the doctrine of Justification by Faith."[49] And, when Ochino left his order, Church, and country, Vittoria broke all connection with him and handed his letters over to Cardinal Cervini, a member of the Inquisition, with the famous words: "It hurts me much that the more he thinks to excuse himself the more he accuses himself, and the more he thinks to save others from the shipwreck, the more he exposes them to the deluge, because he is outside the ark, which saves and makes secure."[50]

Not only Vittoria's spiritual director, but also his secretary, Giuseppe

47. *Compendium processuum Sancti Offici Romae,* in *Carteggio,* p. 344.

48. *Carteggio,* p. 273.

49. Benedetto Nicolini, "Sulla religiosità di Vittoria Colonna," *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni,* XXII (1950), pp. 103, 106. Nicolini's article appeared a year and a half after my essay on this subject in *Convivium* (Turin, Jan. 1949), a coincidence which proves the timeliness of the topic. Without knowledge of each other's work, we have arrived at substantially the same conclusion, diverging basically, however, in our interpretation of the influence exerted by Ochino and Pole on the spiritual life of the Marchesa.

50. *Carteggio,* p. 257.

Jova di Lucca, fled from Italy to Protestant countries. But this happened long after Vittoria's death. The only one of her circle who was actually executed as a heretic was Pietro Carnesecchi, former protonotarius at the Papal court. In the course of his process before the Inquisition in 1566, he was repeatedly questioned about the Marchesa. His statements are, apart from her own writings, the most detailed source on Vittoria's religious position, although one cannot expect absolute objectivity in face of the Inquisition. Carnesecchi boasted of his high connection with the Princess Colonna and appealed to her as a companion in faith, especially in regard to the article of Justification by Faith. Through him we learn, also, that she read at least one of the writings of Martin Luther, his commentary on the psalm *Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum*. She was deeply impressed by it, but did not know that Luther was the author.[51]

There is no proof that Vittoria met Juan Valdès personally, but, from a letter to Giulia Gonzaga, his most devout disciple, we know that she did read his *Espositione sopra San Paolo*. The fact that the writings of the poetess express the same thoughts and reveal the same attitude does not prove, however, that she was a follower of Valdès. It proves, rather, that Valdès' thoughts were common to that time, that his aspirations for a reformed Christianity were shared by all Christians of the intellectual aristocracy in Italy. Simultaneously, but independent of each other, the same movement of reform rose in many different places, in private circles around outstanding prelates such as the Cardinals Contarini, Pole, Morone, and also in the studies of erudite laymen like Valdès and Flaminio, and in the salons of noble ladies like Renée de France, Giulia Gonzaga, and Vittoria Colonna. Only in this present century have these various attempts at reform been recognized as a whole movement with a character in its own right. Imbart de La Tour named it "Evangelism"[52] to distinguish it from the contemporary Protestantism of the Reformation, as well as from the succeeding Catholicism of the Counter-Reformation. As the name implies, the aspiration of Evangelism was the return to the simple spirit of the Gospel. It was not a theological system, but a religious attitude. It was by no means a

51. Cf. *Dal processo di Pietro Carnesecchi dinanzi al Sant'Uffizio,* in Carteggio, pp. 331-41.

52. Pierre Imbart de la Tour, *Les Origines de la Réforme,* vol. III: *L'Evangélisme* (Paris, 1914).

"heresy," but the last Catholic movement of reform before the Council of Trent. It was partly provoked by the Reformation but had its roots deep in the Italian tradition of Christian Humanism. Doubtless it had certain features in common with Protestantism: the passionate search for justification, the desire for a complete reform of the Church, for a simplification of theology, and for a Christocentric individualistic devotion. Both placed the "pure word of God" (i.e., the Bible) above the teaching mission of the Church and preferred to rely on private inspiration rather than on the mediation of priests. Evangelism differed from Protestantism, however, in its anti-revolutionary, undogmatic, temporary, and aristocratic character. This indefinite nature of Evangelism is most strikingly expressed by its theory of "justification through faith without the omission of good works," as we find it in the advice given by Cardinal Pole to Vittoria Colonna: she must believe as if she could be saved only by faith but, on the other hand, she must keep acting as if the salvation of her soul depends entirely upon her good works.[53] Evangelism did not protest against the Catholic Church, but simply spiritualized it, or even ignored it.[54]

This indifference is obvious also in some of the Marchesa's writings, especially in her mystical-allegorical letter to Priuli about the voyage of the soul to the heavenly harbor. Here she describes man as reaching his celestial destination independently of the Church, its priests, and sacraments: "Christ is our only polar star, whom the pilot ought to follow. . . . It is enough to look at Him, in order to sail directly, following His beams."[55] Characteristic also is the fact that, even on the very day of her death, the Marchesa still discussed with Flaminio and Priuli the Epistles of St. Paul. Here the very spirit of Evangelism is manifest once more.[56] In daily life, however, the Marchesa observed all the prescriptions and regulations of the Church: Mass, rosary, breviary,

53. *Carteggio,* p. 333.

54. I have treated the subject of Italian Evangelism more extensively in a separate essay, to be published soon.

55. Bartolomeo Fontana, *Nuovi documenti Vaticani sulla fede e sulla pietà di Vittoria Colonna* (Roma, 1888), p. 21.

56. Cf. letter of Father Maggio, her confessor, to Ascanio Colonna, in Johannes Wyss, *op. cit.,* p. 122. In view of this striking fact, it is hard to believe Nicolini's unproved statement that the Apostle Paul "stirred in her a feeling of dismay" (*op. cit.,* p. 99).

cult of the saints, penance. Carnesecchi reported this to the Court of the Inquisition:

> The Marchesa . . . had tormented herself so much with lashing and hair shirts and other mortifications of the flesh, that she was little more than skin and bones. . . . But then, admonished by the Cardinal (Pole), she withdrew gradually from her rigid life to a reasonable and honorable moderation.[57]

In her final days, she confessed and communicated almost daily. She died as an orthodox Catholic, "with so much serenity of spirit and so much faith that we should honor her death with no other tears than those born of sweetness and pure, holy rejoicing."[58] In accordance with her last will, she was buried in the convent of the Benedictines of St. Anna dei Funari, in Rome, in the manner of a nun.

Thus, Vittoria Colonna stood not at all "firmly on the ground of the Reformation" as Wyss states.[59] And Nobel, also, is completely wrong when he says: "Vittoria went so far as to participate in an agitation against the contemporary leadership of the Church."[60]

However, it would be equally wrong to call Vittoria Colonna a "characteristic phenomenon of the Counter-Reformation,"[61] as Henry Thode considered her, or even "a pillar of the Counter-Reformation,"[62] as Walter Rothes has asserted. On the contrary, her death has a most symbolic meaning. It marks the end of an epoch, for with her died not only one of the most famous but also one of the last representatives of Evangelism. She had foreseen the rise of a new age which was not only different but even opposite to hers, an age characterized by militant faith, official devotion, and intolerance. She had felt a new wind blowing so tempestuously that it swept away, after hardly fifteen years of existence, the individualism of private circles, the noble reserve and resigned pessimism, so characteristic of Evangelism. The spirit of Evangelism was to be choked off for centuries. This bitter presentiment stifled the pen of the poetess and brought about her untimely death, for it

57. *Carteggio*, p. 337.
58. Fontana, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
59. Wyss, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
60. Nobel, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
61. Thode, *op. cit.*, p. 360.
62. Walter Rothes, "Vittoria Colonna als Säule der Gegenreformation," in *Festschrift für Sebastian Merkle* (Düsseldorf, 1922), pp. 265-81.

seems that she did not die of any organic disease but simply of a will to die.[63]

Nevertheless, in Vittoria Colonna the new style of the baroque age was subconsciously present, for that indulgence in emotion and ecstasy which used up the last years of her life is not in line either with the moderate tranquillity of the Renaissance nor with the powerful spiritual struggle of the Reformation. Her mysticism is not harsh and dramatic like the real mysticism of the great saints, but sweet and sentimental. In this overflow of moods and emotions in the mystical writings of the Marchesa, a new taste—the baroque taste—becomes apparent. The lay spirit, which had been pushed out of theological studies, took refuge in religious emotion.

In studying the problem of the religious personality of Vittoria Colonna, it soon becomes apparent that it is definitely not so easily solved as Luzio thought when he said: "The talk about the so-called Protestantism of Vittoria Colonna is absurd."[64] And one cannot dispose of the question as simply as Nobel did, declaring her religious zeal to be mere ambition. For Vittoria's religious attitude can be understood only in the light of Evangelism. The peculiar qualities of this movement, however, have been recognized by none of her biographers up to now. Only in our present time has there come about, even among Catholics, a better comprehension of the nature of Evangelism. Now it is finally possible to see Vittoria Colonna in her true place: she was neither Protestant in the sense of the Reformers nor Catholic in the sense of the Counter-Reformers; she was a true representative of Evangelism. Therefore, we must not ask whether she was Catholic or Protestant, whether she belongs to the age of the Reformation or of the Counter-Reformation. Her true orientation is implied in the title of this essay: Vittoria Colonna stands between Reformation and Counter-Reformation; she is not to be identified with either of them. But she is Catholic according to her own conscience, and from the point of view of Evangelism and of contemporary Catholicism as well.

The Marchesa had even achieved, although a woman, quite a unique position within the Catholic Church. She was not only a friend of all the leading prelates, but, in some cases, as in that of Pietro Bembo,

63. Cf. letter of her physician, Fracastoro, to her secretary, Carlo Gualteruzzi, in Alfred Reumont, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

64. Luzio, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

she herself procured for them the Cardinal's hat.[65] She liberated Bishop Giberti, the head of the Pontifical Secretariat of State, from captivity.[66] She even dared to imprison Ludovico Fossombrone, general of the Capuchins,[67] and to address admonitory and critical letters to the head of the Church, Paul III,[68] who, nevertheless, asked for her opinion on the matter of designating his successor.[69]

We may conclude that the religious development of Vittoria Colonna reflects faithfully the evolution of her age, of that period of transition which led from the Renaissance through the Reformation to the Counter-Reformation. In the beginning, she was a true child of the Renaissance, but, later, under the influence of the Reformation, she became a typical representative of Evangelism. Her death coincided with the decline of this movement. The age which followed, the Counter-Reformation, was entirely alien to her character.

It must be admitted also that Vittoria Colonna owes her permanent reputation more to the charm of her rich and profound personality than to her genius and her art. This charm, united with a princely name and a corresponding wealth, gained for her the friendship of the outstanding men of her age, and a unique position in society and in the Church of the sixteenth century.

65. Cf. Bembo's letter to Vittoria Colonna, in *Carteggio*, p. 174.
66. Cf. Giberti's letter to Vittoria Colonna, in *Carteggio*, p. 51.
67. Cf. Father Cuthbert, *The Capuchins* (New York, 1929), p. 100.
68. Cf. Tacchi Venturi, *Vittoria Colonna, fautrice della Riforma Cattolica* (Rome, 1901), p. 32.
69. Luzio, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

Grundzüge des estnischen Volksglaubens I. By Oskar Loorits. (Skrifter utgivna av Kungl. Gustav Adolfs Akademien för folklivsforskning 18: 1.) Lund, 1949. Distributors, Uppsala: A.-B. Lundequistska Bokhandeln; Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard. xvi, 591 pp. 30 kr.

This volume represents the first half of the author's fundamental work, *Grundzüge des estnischen Volksglaubens* (Outlines of the Estonian Folk Belief). The second half seems also to be ready for print, judging from the fact that he repeatedly refers to the paragraphs of this second volume and even gives (see p. xii) a list of its chapters. The second volume will contain detailed indexes of the whole work. Although the date of its publication is not given, those familiar with Dr. Loorits' indefatigable energy can be sure that any delay will not be his fault.

Loorits published previously a detailed *Liivi rahva usund* (Folk Belief of the Livs) I-III in Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Tartuensis (Dorpatensis), B XI, XII and XVI, Tartu, 1926-28 (nearly 900 pages), most of the material being personally collected by the author among the Livs (Livonians). Other numerous publications of his include *Estnische Volksdichtung und Mythologie* (Estonian Folk Poetry and Mythology), Tartu, 1932. For nearly fifteen years Loorits was director of the Estonian Folklore Archives, in the university city of Tartu—since 1927, when the Archives was founded. An experienced collector of folklore and an excellent organizer, he soon brought the new institution into exemplary condition. At the same time he served as professor at Tartu University. During the Nazi occupation he lost his positions, was banished from Tartu, and, in August, 1944, fled before the imminent Soviet Russian occupation to Sweden. There he was given the opportunity to continue his scholarly activity of which the present work is the result.

The Estonians, the nearest kinsmen of the Finns on the northern side of the Gulf of Finland, numbering only about 1,250,000 people (in Estonia and those in other countries), have a very rich folklore, which has been collected and preserved by them with great care. These collections are among the richest in the world. Estonian folklore (ancient songs, religious beliefs, proverbs, riddles, etc.) has been noted and published, beginning in the seventeenth century. Methodical collect-

ing, however, was not begun until in the second half of the last century, chiefly under the leadership of the enthusiastic and skilful Rev. Dr. J. Hurt (1839-1907); also, of the Rev. (and later, in the free Estonia, a professor of folklore) M. J. Eisen (1857-1934). During that period were published, e. g., *Eesti rahvalaulud* (Estonian Folk Songs) I-II (1879-83) by Dr. M. Veske; *Vana Kannel* (Old Harp) I-II (1875-86) and *Setukeste laulud* (Songs of the Setus) I-III (1904-7) by Hurt.

After Estonia became independent, folklore was included in the curriculum of the University of Tartu (Dorpat), and the collecting of folklore was continued vigorously, especially after the Archives had been founded. All earlier collections, as well as the new ones, were kept in this institution. On January 1, 1941, the folklore collections numbered 711, 573 written pages, of which Hurt's collections, for example, comprised over 114,000 pages and Eisen's over 90,000 pages; those collected under the guidance of Loorits from 1927 to 1940, over 252,000 pages. Although in these two decades of Estonian independence the attention of folklorists was concentrated on the collecting of materials and putting them in order, quite a number of publications have appeared, such as *Eesti rahvalaulud* (Estonian Folk Songs) I-II (1926-32) by a committee (Dr. W. Anderson, professor of folklore at Tartu University, and others) and *Vana Kannel* (Old Harp) (continued) III-IV (1938-41) by H. Tampere.

The oldest records of Estonian (and Livonian) ancient folk beliefs are preserved in the *Chronicon Livoniae* written at the beginning of the thirteenth century. The later chief sources are Johann Forselius' collection of Estonian beliefs, customs, and usages published by J. W. Boecler (1685), newly edited with notes by Dr. Fr. R. Kreutzwald (1854), and the Academician Dr. F. J. Wiedemann's *Aus dem inneren und äusseren Leben der Ehsten* (Inner and Outer Life of the Estonians) (1876). But the main source of the present work is the prodigious collections of the Estonian Folklore Archives. Loorits, in his flight to Sweden, was able to take with him only his own notes, lectures, and a number of copies or short sketches of the Archives' collections, as well as his extensive bibliographical notes. This material, with further additions from printed sources, has enabled him to draw a comprehensive picture of Estonian folk beliefs—on the whole very satisfactory. Undoubtedly he could have presented a still better work had he been in his home country, with all the treasures of the Archives at his disposal.

He himself regrets (see p. VIII) a certain lack of balance in the text and, even more so, in the pictures, which are limited largely to the Greek-Orthodox Estonians, the so-called Setus.

To write a work such as the author has undertaken is not an easy task. As previously stated, old sources are scarce. On the other hand, the original (Finno-Ugric) beliefs are mingled with borrowed ones, and there have been many foreign influences, successively or simultaneously. In remote times the Finno-Ugrians had been in touch with the Indo-Iranians. Later, before our era, the Baltic Finns (Finns, Estonians, etc.) came into close contact with the Lithuanians; then with Teutonic peoples (Goths, Old-Scandinavians, Swedes, Danes and Germans), and with the Russians—at least the ancestors respectively of these or of some of these groups. The Christian influence is also a great factor. Because of these enduring influences which frequently cross each other, one is not surprised by the amount of foreign borrowings, but rather by the survival of ancient Finno-Ugric beliefs. The author's task has been facilitated, however, by a number of competent investigations of the religion of Finno-Ugric peoples published during the last decades, chiefly by Finnish scholars (notice also the author's aforementioned works; further, Eisen's *Estnische Mythologie* [Estonian Mythology, 1925], and others of his on the subject). See the bibliography in Uno Holmberg's excellent account, *Finno-Ugric Mythology* (appeared with his *Siberian Mythology* as vol. IV in *The Mythology of All Races,* edited by J. A. MacCulloch, Boston, 1927), and his later works. Holmberg (1882-1949), later known by the name "Harva," is the eminent authority on this subject.

Loorits' present volume, after preliminaries (a table of contents, map of Estonia, preface, abbreviations, corrigenda and addenda; pages V-XVI), contains the following chapters: *Einleitung* (Introduction), pages 1-21; *Lebenskraft* (Soul-Power), 22-46; *Körper* (Body), 47-69, with the sub-chapter: *Das Beneiden* (The Envying), 65-69; *Leiche* (Dead Body), 70-152, with the sub-chapters: *Fortlebender Leichnam* (Surviving Dead Body, 92-114, *Der Aufenthaltsort der Leiche* (The Dwelling Place of the Dead Body), 114-35, and *Vom lebenden Leichnam zum Teufel* (From the Surviving Dead Body to Devil), 135-52; *Schatten* (Shadow-Soul), 153-81, with the sub-chapters: *Verschiedene Spukgestalten* (Various Phantom-Figures), 158-70, and *Von der Widerspiegelung zum Bild* (From the Reflection to the Image), 170-81; *Atem* (Breath-Soul), 182-97,

with the sub-chapter: *Wirbelwind* (Whirlwind), 190-97; *Name* (Name), 198-250, with the sub-chapter: *Pseudonyme und Geheimsprachen* (Pseudonyms and Secret Languages), 239-50; *Sonderseele* (Separate Soul), 251-304, with the sub-chapters: *"Zieher"* und *"Feuerschwanz"* ("Drawer" and "Fire-Tail"), 266-81, *Nordlicht* (Northern Light), 281-89, *Seelentier* (Soul-Animal), 289-95, and *Puuk und Päär* (two household spirits, "Bearers"), 295-304; *Verwandlung und Seelenwanderung* (Metamorphosis and Transmigration of Souls), 305-63, with the sub-chapters: *Werwolf* (Werewolf), 311-20, *Wanderseele* (Wandering Soul), 321-47, and *Vögel als Seelenverkörperung* (Birds as Embodiments of Souls), 347-63; *Naturgefühl, Lebensauffassung, Weltbild* (Apprehension of Nature, Conception of Life, World-Idea), 364-490, with the sub-chapters: *Statisches Weltbild* (Static World-Idea), 383-447, *Ätiologische und eschatologische Sagen* (Etiological and Eschatological Myths), 447-65, and *Riesen als naturbildende Wesen* (Giants as Nature-Shaping Beings), 465-90; *Geist* (Ghost), 491-542, with the sub-chapter: *Anthropomorphisierung der Naturwesen* (Anthropomorphosis of the Beings of Nature), 520-42; and *Schutzgeist* (Tutelary Genius), 543-91.

The bare titles of the chapters already give some idea of the subject matter of the book (my translations may in some cases not be quite exact, however); it is principally concerned with the dead body and with the soul (typically, shadow-soul, breath-soul, etc.), then with various apparitions and conceptions born out of them or somehow associated with them. According to the author (see pp. 10 ff.), the rudiments of the Estonian beliefs are Animism and Manism, also Shamanism, though in degenerate form; whereas Polytheism cannot be considered. The modern doctrine of Primeval Monotheism and of a supreme deity-idea can not be supported by the Estonian folk tradition; the Estonian folk religion is rather of a Pantheistic character. A kind of Dynamism may also be perceived.

Loorits cites, as a rule, merely the sources referring directly to the Estonian material (folk beliefs collected as such, as well as old songs, folk tales, myths, proverbs, sayings, etc., containing such beliefs). In many other cases, as to the references, he is frugal in order to save space, as he states on page X. By citations, however brief, of the sources of his information (e.g., about the Finno-Ugric or Uralic background to which he refers frequently), the value of the book would be increased considerably with not too many additional pages. As it is, the inquisi-

tive reader must acquire such knowledge himself, e.g., by reading Holmberg's informative work. Loorits does mention two reference books (by K. Donner and L. Hakulinen, see p. X) which, however, do not give circumstantial information by themselves.

Loorits writes with fluency, with vigor and with bold confidence in his own judgment (usually sound, but sometimes a bit arbitrary, especially in respect to his interpretations of linguistic expressions regarding folk beliefs). The book contains very rich and reliable material, interesting to a folklorist, and is a valuable addition to mythological literature.

To give the American reader some idea of the "shadow-soul" (cf. above) of Finno-Ugric peoples, I offer the following personal experience among the Lapps on the border of Finland and Norway. In 1925 I was living with the Lapps along the river Teno (Tana), for the purpose of studying their language. One summer day I went fishing down the river with Aslak, the eldest son of the Guttorm family with whom I lived. At our usual fishing spot in the rapids (rather a dangerous place) we caught a number of grayling (a fish allied to the trout). As I was rather heavy and not too skillful a boatman, it was decided on the return trip that I should be put ashore to walk home, a distance of about four miles; meanwhile, Aslak was to work the boat upstream. Halfway to my destination, I was met by Aslak's mother, who showed obvious signs of agitation, crying out to me, "Where is Aslak?" I pointed to the river, saying, "He is taking the boat upstream with fresh fish for supper." "I'm so glad!" she exclaimed. "I just saw his *væigga* (shadow-soul) and was terribly afraid because I thought you were going further downstream and had had some mishap." The *væigga* (shadow-soul), according to the Lapps, has the same form as that of the person. If a shadow-soul is seen, and if, at the same time, the person whom the shadow-soul represents is coming or intending to come toward the one who sees it (as in this case), no harm will come to the person whose shadow-soul is seen. On the other hand, if the person whose shadow-soul is seen is retreating, this is a bad omen for him, and forebodes a mishap—perhaps even death.

Such a case is illustrated by a story told by Antti, Aslak's youngest brother. One fall day he and his cousin were chopping firewood on a hillside, not far from the river Teno. Antti's uncle was with them for a short time and then left for home. Not long after his departure, Antti

saw him again walking in the distance, on another hillside, and called to his cousin, "Was not your father going home? There he is over there still." And the other boy saw his father, too. While they were discussing the matter, the man (i.e., his shadow-soul) disappeared. Later on, the uncle hurt his finger very badly. The shadow-soul was seen after the departure of the person, which, according to belief, foretells disaster.

As a person may be recognized by his voice or his footstep without actually being seen, so also may his shadow-soul be apprehended. Antti Guttorm told another story from which this is apparent. One winter he and his brother were in the highlands, quite a way from Teno, catching ptarmigans by snares on the hillsides. They were living in a turf hut. One evening they sat eating supper before the fireplace, when suddenly they heard a horse-drawn sleigh approaching and then stopping near the hut. Then they heard someone alight from the sleigh, and recognized their father's footsteps and heard his voice as he admonished his horse. (They were expecting their father to come in the near future with new supplies of food.) The elder brother said, "Our father has arrived already! Go have a look!" But when they went out, they saw no one. They were astonished and discussed the matter thoroughly. Two days later the whole story was repeated in every detail, except that this time their father actually arrived. The old man met with no subsequent mishap, however, as his shadow-soul had appeared before his actual arrival.

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The Birth of the Bible: A New Approach. By IMMANUEL LEWY, with an introduction by MORDECAI M. KAPLAN. New York: The Bloch Publishing Company, Selling Agents. 245 pp. $3.50.

An enthusiastic Jewish scholar undertakes to extract the essentials of Hebrew religion from what he admits to be the complicated and inconsistent sources which compose the Hebrew Bible. He tells us frankly that he started his researches because the ruling biblical criticism had not appreciated the uniqueness of the Hebrew message and had watered it down in favor of Christianity or Aryan influx; he says that Israel's "genius" is not racial but spiritual (p. 218). He, therefore, minimizes gentile higher criticism, even though admitting that Jewish scholars

have "followed rather slavishly the scientific conclusions as well as procedures of non-Jewish scholars" (p. 5); and in place of gentile investigation, he substitutes a new criticism of his own. He is acquainted (or seems to be) with modern analysis into documents called J, E, D, P, etc. But he feels (no doubt with considerable reason) that the tremendous tour de force of biblical higher criticism has not yet issued in results of sufficient constructive significance to serve the spiritual needs of the present world crisis.

The author finds at the basis of the Old and New Testaments alike the unity of the human race. Mankind has general and lasting concerns over and above any particular or temporary interests. Every man, group, and nation should work for generosity, patience, responsibility, and cheerfulness, avoiding revenge, hate, fear, greed, and violence. This, he says, would tend toward the establishment of social justice as a world-wide ideal and the test of true religion.

This point of view is expressed, emphasized, and reiterated from one end of the book to the other. It seems to be a kind of reaction, symbolic of present day youth feeling, against both Jewish and Christian ecclesiasticism, sacerdotalism, and supernaturalistic orthodoxy in favor of a prophetic, naturalistic, and socially minded universalism. If the rising generation of Jews and Christians could really absorb at least a portion of Mr. Lewy's gospel, we might begin to prepare to be on the way toward a new heaven and a new earth. Our only difficulty relates to the critical apparatus with which Mr. Lewy distils ethical and religious idealism from the sacred record.

The author's theory is that the religion of the Bible and most of the achievements of civilization down to our own time are due to a great personality who lived in the age of King David, and who has never been identified until now. This personality, in the author's own words,

> became the source of Western religion and civilization. If he had not been born, we should have no Hebrew prophets, no Bible, no traditional Judaism, no Christianity, no Koran and no Islam. Even the American and French constitutions would not have come to light, for they have learned the finest and subtlest of their tenets from him. He wrote the first history of mankind, yet no history book tells of his achievement. He was the father of classic literature, but there is no literary book that mentions his name. Although he created the key concepts of our religion, he remained unknown to the world (p. 8).

Some years ago a noted Oxford professor believed that he had dis-

covered, lurking behind every grammatical bush in the Hebrew text, a tribe in the far south of Palestine by the name of Jerachmeel. And in the same way, Mr. Lewy believes that he has now discovered, behind most of biblical history and behind most of medieval and modern history, a prophet by the name of Nathan, whom he identifies with a figure of that name in the days of David.

Just how far the scholarly world is expected by the author to take seriously his gigantic reconstruction of the biblical writings may perhaps be hinted in his own words toward the end of his book:

> I am fully aware that my interpretation of the origin of Israel's spiritual heritage is not the only possible one and that many of the points I have made may be open to criticism and have to give way to more adequate interpretation. . . . At any rate, my novel theory may stimulate a revision of entrenched positions in biblical criticism and so contribute directly or indirectly to bring about fresh elucidations of controversial points (pp. 215-16).

This reviewer is under the impression that Mr. Lewy's book is one of the signs appearing here and there that the orthodoxy of modern biblical criticism (both Old and New Testament) is giving way before the pressure of the times. Critical scholarship, in the epoch before the first World War, had a complacency which continued more or less through the inter-war period. Its failure to implement the faith of the multitude, in an age of increasing confusion, supplied one of the impulses giving rise to "neo-orthodoxy." There is a widespread feeling in the churches akin to that which is attributed to Mary at the tomb: "They have taken away our Bible; and we know not where they have laid it."

Mr. Lewy's theory about Nathan will undoubtedly go the way of Jerachmeel. But he is a person of sane mentality who should be respected as a symptom of the ominous age in which we live.

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The Psalms Translated and Interpreted in the Light of Hebrew Life and Worship. By Elmer A. Leslie. Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1949. 448 pp. $5.00.

The purpose of the author is threefold, and is well summarized on the back of the dust-cover as follows: "to show the psalms of Israel as

part of the psalm literature of the ancient East, to show in each psalm the function it had in the living worship of Israel, and to make the psalms more meaningful for all worshipers of God in the world of here and now." One can tell that years of sympathetic study have gone into this work. The writer has missed little published matter of relevance, with one pardonable but important exception which I shall mention at the end of this review. He is most indebted to Gunkel, but he has also drawn heavily upon Mowinckel and Schmidt.

His rendering of the psalms is entirely new and based upon emended readings, which are specified (in footnotes, and in Latin characters) only in those cases where the specialist can not readily reconstruct them. The translation is in boldface and is broken up into little bits preceded and followed by introductory and expository matter, as free from technical language as practicable, in ordinary type. Except that, to my taste, "oh, the happiness of" is no improvement on "(how) happy is/are," I entirely approve of the modernity of the language of the translation, and the English of the writer's own composition makes very agreeable reading. The psalms are treated not in the order in which they occur in the Psalter but, in accordance with the purpose which we have defined, in a new arrangement in eleven groups (each divided into subgroups) of similar character and function, and every psalm is provided with a title suggestive of its essence. Everybody who has tried knows how difficult it is to devise a logical classification for all of the one hundred and fifty psalms. Leslie's is about as good as any. For practical reasons the psalm-captions are omitted entirely, and (in accordance with the practice of the English Versions) disregarded in the numbering of the verses. I shall accordingly likewise follow the verse-numeration of the English Versions in this review. "To facilitate locating quickly a particular psalm which one may desire to consult, an index of every psalm in numerical order, along with its title, has been provided immediately following the Table of Contents." A rich bibliography and indices to biblical references and to persons and subjects are provided at the end of the volume.

The reader has probably already divined that my estimate of the book under review is on the whole favorable. In effect, I consider it a worthwhile investment, not only for ministers, divinity students, and educated pious laymen, but also for specialists.

By saying that, however, of course I do not sign away the right to

differ with the author on many matters, both small and great, of which only a few can be mentioned here. Leslie rightly includes Ps. 56 among those of individuals threatened by personal enemies (pp. 335 f.). In view of the fact that the second, eucharistic, half of that poem includes a verse (13) which is almost identical with Ps. 116:8-9, it should be obvious that Ps. 116 is the thanksgiving psalm of one who has escaped the snares of foes (what else can "Thou hast saved my foot from slipping" mean naturally?—cf. also 118:13), not of sickness. That the hyperbole of 116:3 is as applicable to danger from enemies as from illness is proved beyond cavil by 18:4-5 (p. 260). The thanksgiving half of Ps. 56 shares an even more unequivocal verse (11) with Ps. 118 (v. 6), and Leslie rightly classifies the latter as a song of thanksgiving for deliverance from enemies (pp. 112-16). But he interprets it as a song of *national* thanksgiving, and about that I have my doubts. The "confession," the most characteristic part of any thanksgiving song, which constitutes the bulk of this admittedly more or less antiphonal composition, is in the singular. If Leslie finds v. 10 in its present form—"*All nations* surrounded me, etc."—too much to accept, with Schmidt, as a mere Oriental exaggeration for an attack by thugs on an individual, I sympathize with him. But I am convinced that this is one of the many cases in the Hebrew Scriptures where the common word *goy* (nation) or its plural, *goyim,* is nothing but a product of scribal sloppiness. Thus in Ps. 9-10, where *goyim* is invariably equated either with "wicked men" or with "mere mortal(s)," it is obviously miswritten for *ge'im,* "arrogant men"; cf. in 10:2 "the wicked man in his arrogance" and also 36:11. The clue to the correct reading in Ps. 118:10 is contained in v. 12, where we have "They surrounded me *like bees,* etc." "Like bees" is spelled in Hebrew *kdbrym,* and "all nations," *kl gwym.* Observe that both expressions begin with *k* and end with *ym,* and it becomes pretty obvious that in the latter expression the first letter, *k,* is again the particle meaning "like," and the rest is corrupted from the name of some other insects or animals which attack in swarms or in herds or packs. Now, in Ps. 22:12, 16, a man beset by enemies complains, in Leslie's translation (p. 364), that "strong steers encircle me; bulls of Bashan surround me," and "many dogs surround me." I conclude that *kl gwym* (118:10) is a corruption of *kklbym* (like dogs). The sense, then, of 118:10 is: "Like dogs they (namely, my enemies, v. 7) surrounded me: in the name of the Lord I escaped." At the ends of vv. 10, 11, and 12 I read *'immalet* (I escaped)

for *'amilam*. Conversely, in the light of 118:12, I am inclined to read *sera'im* (wasps) instead of *mere'im* (evildoers) in 22:16—for the preceding word is used precisely of a swarm of bees in Jud 14:8—and instead of *hereb* (sword) in 22:20.

My suggestions up to this point may well meet with a receptive attitude on the part of the author. The following go deeper, and I don't anticipate a speedy conversion. But I make them notwithstanding. I remain skeptical about the cultic dramas of Mowinckel and Schmidt, and I am further of the opinion that Leslie has allowed Schmidt to influence him unduly in the matter of jailbird songs. A psalmist who complains of plots and evil designs on the part of enemies is not ipso facto the victim of a frame-up. I am not persuaded that false witnesses (e.g., Ps. 27:12) and prison (e.g., 142:7) can be taken for granted where they are not mentioned, and that means in most of the author's "Prayers of the Falsely Accused" (pp. 315 ff.). Further, though I consider the author's programmatic pronouncement on "primitive tempers" in the Psalms (pp. 18 f.) wholly admirable, and commend him for adhering to it for the most part, I cannot but deplore his lapse on page 258. Can a Liberal Protestant scholar in the middle of the twentieth century contrast with a good conscience the vindictiveness of a psalmist whose homeland and temple have just been destroyed by the Babylonians (Ps. 137:8-9) with "the love of Christ," when Jesus notoriously displays, on occasion, a vindictiveness which (a) is no better motivated and (b) includes consignment to a region of everlasting torment (Matt. 11:20-24; 12:31-32; 23:33; 25:46, and parallels)? Happily there is reason to believe that this is no more than what I have called it, a lapse.

My profoundest disagreement with Professor Leslie is doubtless on the dating of the Psalms. Thanks to his deep drinking at the well of Gunkel, which I mentioned at the beginning of this review, he is free from the Maccabean mania which once possessed students of the Psalms. That is all to the good, but I wish he had been more receptive in this matter to Mowinckel and Schmidt, and had laid some other Wellhausian spooks which he suffers to stalk through the pages of his book. Thus, he still dates Ps. 55:1-18b, 22 in the Greek period—early Greek (312 B.C.) it is true—and a host of other psalms in the Persian period, whereas there is no reason for and plenty against dating any whole chapter (as distinct from a few added verses) later than the *early exilic* Ps. 137. Repeatedly we are told that this or that passage is influenced by Amos,

Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and/or Deutero-Isaiah when, in reality, either the implications of the passage are misunderstood (this is notably the case in Ps. 50, where the "figurative" interpretation of vv. 15 and 23 is simply impossible) or the idea is no innovation of any of the classical prophets but a part of Israel's most ancient heritage. A good example of that is the idea of individual retribution—side by side with collective retribution, of course—which antedates (Deuteronomy and) Ezekiel, as does also its outstanding monument, the Book of Proverbs; witness Gen. 31:42b; 38:10; Exod. 22:26; I Sam. 16:7 ff.; 25:39; Ps. 18:20-24, etc., etc., etc.

Unfortunately *the* book on the spiritual evolution of Israel, the most significant contribution to Old Testament scholarship of the past fifteen years, is composed in the Israeli idiom, which to most specialists is as alien as Etruscan. It is titled *Toledot ha-emunah hay-Yisre'elit mime qedem 'ad sof Bayit Sheni* (The History of Israelite religion from earliest times to the end of the Second Temple); the first volume of it appeared in 1937 and the third, dealing with the classical prophets, in 1948. Its author is Dr. Yehezqel Kaufmann, until 1949 a teacher at a secondary school in Haifa and now a professor of Bible at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem. An English translation of his magnum opus is an urgent desideratum of Bible scholarship. Meanwhile, it is not Professor Leslie's fault that Kaufmann's work remains inaccessible.

Otherwise, as I have intimated, his book *The Psalms* is up-to-date, and its excellences many. I recommend it heartily.

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Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums. By Hans Joachim Schoeps. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1949. vii, 526 pp. DM 27.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, under the influence of Hegel, the Tübingen school of New Testament critics explained the whole development of early Christianity in terms of "thesis" (Jewish Christianity in Jerusalem), "antithesis" (gentile Christianity and the apostle Paul), and "synthesis" (the early Catholic Church). After this rather topheavy theory foundered on the rock of chronology, the study

of Jewish Christianity became somewhat desultory until Lohmeyer's analysis of the resurrection narratives (*Galiläa und Jerusalem,* 1936) brought it back to general attention. Investigations of the pseudo-Clementine literature had continued, especially from the standpoint of literary criticism, but few scholars were concerned with correlating these studies with the New Testament or the history of patristic thought. Yet, as Schoeps observes, this is at once one of the most difficult and one of the most important problems in the history of early Christianity. His book is an exceedingly valuable contribution toward its solution.

According to Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* i. 26. 2), the "Ebionites" believed in one God, the Creator, and taught that Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary, became "Christ" (Messiah) because of his obedience to the Law (this is from Hippolytus, *Ref.* vii. 34). They used only the gospel of Matthew, and rejected the apostle Paul as an apostate from the Law. They interpreted the prophetic writings *curiosius,* presumably in their effort to uphold the perpetuity of the Law, which they continued to keep in toto. What is the relation of this group to early Christianity and Judaism and to the views upheld in the Clementine *Homilies* and *Recognitions?* Here is the essence of the problem which Schoeps has investigated.

His book consists of five long chapters, six additional notes, and a very full biblography and index. The chapters deal first with the sources of our information in patristic and rabbinic writings, with Ebionite literature (the Jewish-Christian gospels, the Old Testament translation of Symmachus, and the Ebionite source of the *Clementina*), and with the intimations of Ebionism within the New Testament canon. On this last point he observes that the facts on which the Tübingen school built its edifice still remain; the old Catholic church did develop in opposition to Jewish Christianity and on the foundation of Paul. The second chapter is concerned with the Christology of Jewish Christians. It was essentially adoptianist; that is to say, Jesus was a man like other men who, because of his virtue, was adopted by God as his son at the time of the baptism. The Ebionites described Jesus by the old synoptic and apocalyptic title "Son of Man," and insisted on a kind of millennarianism which the Church as a whole gradually abandoned. They interpreted Jesus as the new Moses, the "true prophet" foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15. In the third chapter, Schoeps discusses the legalism of the

Ebionites. He argues, following the Tübingen school, that the Simon of the *Clementina* is a mask for the apostle Paul; in them Peter and James are the genuine apostles of the Jesus who came to fulfill the Law. He also points out that all the testimonies of the church fathers and of the Ebionites themselves agree that the Law of Moses is still in effect, although, according to the Ebionite *Preaching of Peter,* there have been interpolations into the pure and original Law. These interpolations included anthropomorphic descriptions of God and immoralities ascribed to the patriarchs. To the Law the Ebionites added a moderate vegetarianism and an enthusiasm for holy poverty, as well as a strong emphasis on ritual washings and baptism. The fourth chapter takes up the Ebionite opposition to sacrifices and traces its antecedents through the prophets and apocalyptic and rabbinic literature. These Jewish Christians also regarded the destruction of the temple as a proof of God's rejection of it, and they considered the kings of Israel no better than tyrants. Their faith was much like that of the Essenes.

The last chapter examines the history of Jewish Christianity and its place in the history of religion. "Die Urgemeinde, die erste Jüngerschaft Jesu, war judenchristlich" (p. 256). But Schoeps does not follow the terminological confusion of the Tübingen school, which identified later Ebionism with this primitive Jewish Christianity. He compares the relation of Ebionism to the *Urgemeinde* with that of Marcion to Paul, or with that of Valentinianism to the Fourth Gospel. But he cites Franz Rosenzweig to the effect that the Jewish Christians are "in der ersten Hinsicht ein Anachronismus und in der Zweiten eine Paradoxie" (p. 324)—though in the early centuries they were not an anachronism. Modifications of their views are to be found among the Elkesaites (whose name he suggests is derived from the LXX birthplace of Nahum, Elkisei), and their religion lives on within Islam.

The additional notes deal with the epistle of James (written by a Jewish Christian, but not by an Ebionite), the Ebionites' name in Symmachus, his praise of Palestine as the Holy Land, fragments of his commentary on the Ebionite gospel, the question of Ebionite Acts of the Apostles (Schoeps concludes that they existed and contained speeches which resemble Stephen's speech in our Acts), and finally the question of the relation of Epiphanius to the *Clementina.* He carefully examines the evidence and concludes that Epiphanius' view that the *Clementina*

had been interpolated by the Ebionites is erroneous. By Epiphanius' time the old Ebionite *Preaching of Peter* had become incorporated into the romance, the *Acts of Peter* (not the same as the second-century *Acts*), but Epiphanius did not know this fact. We may observe that in *Haer.* 26. 16. 8 (i. 296:25 Holl), Epiphanius refers to something like *Clem. hom.* iv. 16, which almost certainly did not belong to the *Grundschrift.*

Schoeps's analysis of Jewish Christianity is a highly significant contribution to our understanding of early Christian life and thought. It is clear and, at the same time, thorough. The subject is a very complicated one, and the reader may wonder whether the various stages of the development of the *Clementina,* for example, can really be traced so clearly. By isolating the subject of the Jewish Christianity which radically proclaimed itself as the only true Christianity, we run the risk of losing sight of the very great extent to which Judaism directly influenced the early Church. This has been discussed recently by Marcel Simon in his *Verus Israel* (Paris, 1948). Many patristic exegetes followed in the steps of their rabbinic predecessors and contemporaries. Paul of Samosata was a dynamistic monarchian. His opponents called him a Judaizer; he appealed to earlier ecclesiastical tradition. Both parties were right, for his predecessor at Antioch, Theophilus (*ca.* 180), was in some respects more Jewish than the Ebionites. For him Christianity is essentially obedience to the Law, the Decalogue (on his use of it see my article in *HTR,* 40 [1947], 1-17).

There are singularly few errors or omissions in this big book. We can readily understand the slip which substituted "Die jüdisch-orientalische Roman-literatur" for the correct title of Kerényi's book in the bibliography, although we should like to have seen listed W. L. Knox's *St. Paul and the Church of Jerusalem* (Cambridge, 1925). A Greek quotation seems to have dropped out of note 2 on page 143.

At the present time patristic studies are entering into a new epoch. One of the most auspicious signs for the future is Schoeps's *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums.* It reminds us once more that historical study does not lie dormant in Germany, and proves to us that philology and source-criticism are the only bases on which can be built the history of theology.

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Volumen Medicinae Paramirum. By THEOPHRASTUS VON HOHENHEIM called PARACELSUS. Translated by KURT F. LEIDECKER. (Supplements to the Bulletin of the History of Medicine.) Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1949. vii, 69 pp. $1.75.

Paracelsus was born at Einsiedeln, Switzerland in 1495. He was the son of a physician but, being possessed of an enquiring mind and a demonic urge to learn, he could not be content to follow tamely in the steps of his father. He became one of the most revolutionary thinkers of his day, standing between the medieval period with its alchemists and medicine men, its scholastics and tradition-bound intellectuals on the one hand, and the scientist and physicians of the modern epoch on the other. In his day medicine was either a magic art or a regimen governed by a rigid and formal application of rules and dogmas, unchanged since the days of Hippocrates and Galen. As Dr. Leideker points out in his most interesting preface:

> What makes this man great as a thinker and physician is the anti-intellectualism of his attitude . . . the vigor with which he extolled the ethical calling of the physician. . . . He rejected speculation in favor of experience. . . . A real physician, according to him, knows not only herbs and concoctions, he is versed in the sciences and theology and practices love—and trust. Thus as one of the lonely geniuses of the period . . . he made possible beyond his ken at the time, and without reaping the credit the modern advances in medicine by tearing down the traditions of the ancients and pointing to an even more fruitful future of medicine in which man will be considered as a whole, that is as an entity in a larger environment than that of his body alone.

The text entitled *Paramirum* is only a fragment of the whole work, the last part dealing with treatment having been lost. These chapters are concerned with five powers or *entia* which hold sway over man and have power to cause illness. Each of these powers can cause any one of the known diseases, and Paracelsus urges enlightened physicians not to be content to diagnose the disease but to enquire further into the cause of the illness, to determine which of the five *entia* is operative in this particular case.

The first power, which Paracelsus defines, is the *ens astrale,* the power of the heavenly bodies. This "is something we do not see, something which sustains life in us and in everything that is alive and sentient. This something derives from the heavenly bodies."

In the fifteenth century astrology was still one of the recognized sciences studied by every physician. But, in this text, Paracelsus says:

> The heavenly bodies you took over as a principle from the teachings of astronomy and then pursued the untimely indication. But you did not think this through at all. The heavens, that is the heavenly body, you say, makes our body what it is, which is not so. . . . The heavenly bodies do not impart any disposition color form, property, nature, nor essence. . . . The heavenly bodies do not endow us, nor draw us on, nor shape our characteristics, you ought to note well in what way they nevertheless do disease and dispatch the body.

He goes on to say that, even though the planets had never existed, yet there would still be born persons who had the characteristics ascribed to the planets, such as saturnine or martial. "Nevertheless," he continues, "remember that we may not live without the heavenly bodies. For heat and cold and the digestive agent of the things we eat and utilize, come from them."

He then suggests that the differences of men represent the divers urges of the divine creative spark which moves towards the complete expression of itself. When this has been accomplished, "people will return who are going to look like those that have passed on. . . . When all colors and manners of men have been exhausted and no distinctive one is forthcoming, but all are the same, then this age has run its course." Such a standstill, such a coming-to-the-end of the world would result from the withdrawal of that mysterious "something" which is called the life of the living being, which Paracelsus calls the M(ysterium) M(agnum):

> The M(ysterium) M(agnum) is such that all creatures live by it and have their lives in and through it. This M(ysterium) M(agnum) may be poisoned and changed, and man may be obliged to take it up (in this poisonous form) into himself. As long as his life is and dwells within the M(ysterium) M(agnum) so long does his body have no choice but must suffer to have what is in the M(ysterium) M(agnum) poured out over him, and be polluted by it.

The second power is the *ens veneni,* the power of poisons. Here Paracelsus expounds the very modern doctrine of the relativity of good and evil, for "everything is in itself perfect, but in relation to some other thing is either a poison or a good." He illustrated this law by the well-known example of the snake, which is not poisonous to itself, and concludes, "God has appointed (to each one) an alchemist . . . who segregates the two, the poison in its proper bag, the good substance into

the body." This theory is then expanded to explain the power of the body to assimilate what it needs from the food and eliminate the useless or poisonous elements. When a man's "alchemist" fails in his task, illness arises. Or, as a modern physician would say, the patient suffers from auto-intoxication or from food poisoning.

The third power is the *ens naturale.* There is within the body a natural order or law which Paracelsus calls the "firmament in the body." This "does not need food from outside," but the physical body is like the earth, and provides food for the four members from itself as source. "For there are four spirits in the body, which the body sustains, but the body also contains something else which supports the firmament and the earth. But we do not flatter ourselves to be able to fathom what form or appearance it has." This is the *ens naturale,* which determines the fate of every living being from the time of his birth until the hour of his death.

The fourth power is the *ens spirituale,* which is so called because "the body does not share in it." "It manifests itself in the body and yet is not of the body." "When the spirit suffers the body suffers also." And, "just as the air keeps creatures from suffocating, so the spirit subtends the body. This spirit has its existence in man and is capable of being recognized." For "spirits know each other even as I and the next person know each other; they speak to one another, just as we do ordinarily, but freely without recourse to common speech." One spirit can cause injury to another by being directed against it by the will. It then suffers and endures the injury in the body. "The suffering is felt in the body, though it is not of the body nor physically in the body, but it is the spirit that causes it."

Those phenomena which primitives ascribe to the activity of spirits, in the Middle Ages were still believed to be due to witchcraft or the evil eye, but here Paracelsus is endeavoring to penetrate more deeply into the mystery they present and comes up with a theory which, given the difference in language, foreshadows the discoveries of depth psychology and the modern theories of the autonomy of the psyche. The diseases of the body which result from the *ens spirituale,* he declares, should not be treated with medicine. "For that would be in vain. However, treat the mind, and the body will get well. For, the spirit is sore and not the body." He continues, "It is possible that a person who has an evil disposition and loathes himself may end up with inflicting the curse

on himself." Apparently his contemporaries were no more ready to accept these revolutionary ideas than were the academically minded physicians of Freud's day to accept his theories of the unconscious, for he continues, "And don't you physicians treat this as a joke. You are not aware of the smallest part that the power of the will plays."

In the discussion of these first four so-called Pagan powers, Paracelsus is struggling with the problem of the imponderables. What is life—that essence which is something apart from the body it informs? What is it that makes the unique quality of the individual? What is it that makes it possible for one man's attitude of love or hate or anger to influence another, and that without the intermediary of words or physical contact, though it may require the creation of a concrete symbol to become operative?

In his exploration of these problems Paracelsus comes very close to many modern conceptions. Psychosomatic medicine might have been based directly on his formulation of the *ens naturale;* in his discussion of the *ens spirituale* we find ideas in embryonic form which the researches of C. G. Jung into the nature and qualities of the collective unconscious have brought clearly into the light. There are also to be found in the *Paramirum* foreshadowings of the most modern concepts of the nature of time and space, and of that strange congeries of half-conscious faculties grouped together under the name of extra-sensory perception.

In his final chapter Paracelsus deals with the fifth power, the *ens dei.* This he calls the one Christian power. He says: "All health and sickness comes from God. . . . Be well aware that God has instituted punishment, a sign to make known to us by our sicknesses that our affairs are nothing . . . and that we are ignorant of the truth." Every disease is a purgatory, so the healing can only take place in the predestined hour. "Hence no physician is able to heal, except the purgatory has been extinguished by God. Thus, the physician is he who works in harmony with the predestined purgatory." It is God who sends the patient to a particular physician. "When God, thus, assigns the patient a physician, reflect whether the physician does or does not produce anything by his art, in as much as God has created the medicine for the diseases and the physician to boot." These words contain wisdom and comfort (!) for physicians, and especially for psychotherapists, who perhaps see more of those diseases caused by a bad conscience or by the secret guilt which

results so often from an unconscious conflict. "Remember," warns Paracelsus, "there is no medicine for death, only for diseases." "The art of a real physician comes from God." "And no physician is to know when the time for health is at hand, for God has that in his power."

It is indeed remarkable that a man living still in the Middle Ages should have seen so far into the future and so truly. That he should have been able so to free himself from the cast of thought of his time as to ask himself the kind of question that Paracelsus is discussing in this little book. His thought was so revolutionary that he stood almost alone, and most of his ideas lay unrecognized for four hundred years. It has not been until the present century that scientists have begun to explore those strange regions of the psyche which he foreshadows so confidently in the *Paramirum*. If this book is rightly understood, theologians as well as physicians may find much that is valuable, much that is true and much that leaves one realizing more clearly than before how deep is the mystery—the *Paramirum*—that shrouds the real problems of life.

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Theologia Germanica. Edited by Joseph Bernhart. Translated by Willard R. Trask. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1949. 240 pp. $2.50.

The Great German Mystics: Eckhart, Tauler and Suso. By James M. Clark. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1949. 121 pp. 12*s.* 6*d.*

Jacob Boehme. By Hans Lassen Martensen. Edited by Stephen Hobhouse. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949. 200 pp. $5.00.

Nietzsche once mocked at the effeminate tone, the emasculating aroma radiating from the best known devotional work of medieval mysticism, the *Imitatio Christi,* attributed to Thomas à Kempis. He obviously knew little or nothing of Meister Eckhart, (*ca.* 1260-1327), Tauler (*ca.* 1300-1361), and the *Theologia Germanica* (*ca.* 1370). Even if he had known only the latest of these masterpieces of German mysticism, his high literary perceptiveness would certainly have prevented him from seeing anything effeminate in it.

This "German Theology," whose author will probably remain unknown to us forever, is doubtless an extremely manly book. Even in its

preaching of humility, there is nothing weakly submissive. There is almost harshness in the author's tone when he tries to bring it home to man that he "is nothing, has nothing, can do and is capable of nothing" and is "indebted to God and . . . all creatures" for everything (ch. 26), when he ridicules the superman who fancies himself as "the lord" of the universe (ch. 25). He strongly protests against those sentimentalists and sensualists who "would always have our mouths daubed with sugar" (ch. 10). Like Eckhart's *Entwerdung*, the *Theologia Germanica's* withdrawal from "the flow of events," its abandonment of all earthly desires, has little in common with passive resignation, but has a strongly active, almost Stoic note of contempt of the world.

According to the *Theologia Germanica*, in his higher mystical union with God, man can and should rise completely above all the needs of his lower interests, "his arrogating I, Mine, Me," his narrow "self-hood, self-serving, I-hood" or "Old Adam, the bite that Adam took of the apple," all "Thou, Thine," "this or that" (see chs. 3, 15, 16, 36, 43, 51); and, again, a basic idea, virile in the best sense of the word—man himself must make the decisive effort to rise above all worldly appetites and wants. It insists, with a remarkable speculative boldness and moral strength, that even "God Himself can never make a man virtuous, good or blessed, so long as he is outside of his soul; that is, so long as he casts about outwardly with his senses and reason, and does not withdraw into himself and learn to know his own life, who and what he is." (ch. 9). This is the proud and, at the same time, truly humble aim of the book, to show how one can become what one really is, independent of all the pressure of the outside world; and this aim is described, again and again, in the brief tract, in moving terms, largely in the language of ascetic mysticism of the late Middle Ages, but also in words of timeless, striking truth. One of the most stirring expressions of the high religious and human aims of the book is, perhaps, that deeply touching prayer: "I would fain be to the Eternal Good, what his own hand is to a man" (ch. 10, 54).

Although there is certainly no intention to depart from Catholic dogma, some of the christological speculations of the *Theologia Germanica* deviate, to say the least, from the common teaching of the Church concerning the eternal *visio beatifica* of Christ. According to the principals of the *theologia negativa*, it denies that sorrow, trouble, or displeasure can be ascribed to "God, so far as He is God"; but,

God is troubled on account of men's sins . . . where God is man, or where God dwells in a deified man. And there, behold, sin is so abhorrent to God, and grieves him so much, that God himself would willingly suffer agony and mortal death, if He could thereby wipe out the sin of but one man (ch. 37).

For "Life . . . is in Christ to perfection, else he were not the Christ" (ch. 43).

The translation of the *Theologia Germanica* by Susanna Winkworth, re-published in London in 1937, is reportedly out of print, therefore, Willard Trask's revised and enlarged version of the work, accompanied by notes and a detailed introduction from the pen of one of the greatest contemporary interpreters of medieval mysticism, Joseph Bernhart, is most welcome. This introduction contains part of an abridged survey of Bernhart's extremely valuable work, *Die philosophische Mystik des Mittelalters von ihren antiken Ursprüngen bis zur Renaissance* (1922).

The present reviewer does not agree with Bernhart's judgment on numerous points; he would especially object to his depreciation of Pseudo-Dionysius. Still, I urgently hope for far greater recognition of Bernhart's lifework, which is certainly no less valuable than that of Dean Inge, Rufus Jones, and Evelyn Underhill. It is also to be hoped that the greatest poet among the German mystics of the fourteenth century, Heinrich Suso, will soon be accessible in an English edition which I am preparing.

The second book, by James M. Clark, is a very useful survey of the lives, the writings, and the influence of these three towering figures of medieval German mysticism. But, in his three brief chapters on Eckhart and his two great successors, the author hardly breaks any new ground. Moreover, there are a number of errors. The leading thinker of German romanticism, Franz von Baader, in one place is called "Friedrich von Baader" (p. 27), and the fact most relevant to Baader's rediscovery of German mysticism is omitted. More than twenty years ago, in my book on Baader, I drew attention to the fact that Franz Pfeiffer was definitely inspired to write his basic work on the German mystics by his friend, Magg, a student of Baader, and by Baader himself. A. Lasson and J. Quint did not write a *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie,* as Mr. Clark states in his "Select Bibliography" (p. 112), but Quint alone wrote the chapters on Eckhart and German mysticism in Überweg's *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie,* II (1928). Furthermore, it seems to me hardly tenable to assume that Eckhart was no adherent of

the *theologia negativa,* so widespread in Christian and Jewish thought of the Middle Ages (p. 19); that Schopenhauer "claimed to be led by the light of reason alone" (p. 27); that Joseph Görres was a spirit "in some sense kindred" to Suso because he wrote about him (p. 70); and it is almost meaningless to say, "Small wonder that the prose of Suso is full of the song of the birds and the scent of flowers, of sunshine and light; . . . the greater part of Suso's life was lived on the banks of Lake Constance" (p. 55).

These comparatively negligible points would scarcely be worth mentioning if Mr. Clark had not put almost exclusive emphasis on historical facts. The interpretation of the subtle teachings of the great mystics, in fact, is far too neglected in his book. Eckhart's profound and paradoxical praise of *Abgeschiedenheit,* as withdrawal from the world and fullness of life, is not mentioned at all; and there is certainly not enough justice done to Suso's stirring and desperate pondering over human suffering.

Nevertheless, Mr. Clark's small book has special merits in drawing attention to the often neglected David von Augsburg, and, particularly, to the MSS of Marquard von Lindau in the university library at Innsbruck. Also, his exposure of the Nazi exploitation of Eckhart for their "blood-and-soil" propaganda is extremely well done.

The third book is very different in outline and purpose. Stephen Hobhouse represents the finest flowering of Christian life in present day England. He is an avowed pacifist who paid a very high price for his convictions in the First World War—a fact to which he refers only in a rather veiled way in the form of a gross understatement. He is the beloved friend and helper of the oppressed of all kinds; and we are in debt to him as a scholar for his rediscovery of William Law, Boehme's greatest English adherent in the eighteenth century, to whose work he has devoted several of his books.

While taking into account the scholarly diversity of Boehme interpretations of the present day, Hobhouse's new edition of Martensen's work on Boehme is intended to serve essentially devotional needs. I cannot quite follow Hobhouse and Rufus M. Jones in their especially high evaluation of Martensen's achievements. I believe that Howard H. Brinton's *The Mystic Will* (New York, 1930) offers an at least equally fine and perceptive analysis of Boehme, and Alexandre Koyré's *La Philosophie de Jacob Boehme* (Paris, 1929, not 1920) is evidently

superior from the viewpoint of historical and philosophical criticism. But Hans Lassen Martensen's book certainly deserves preference to most of the modern German Boehme literature; and it doubtless deserved re-editing, as these "studies in theosophy" by the Danish Primate Bishop have been long out of print, not only the Danish original of 1882, but also the German translation of the same year, and even the English translation by T. Rhys Evans.

Martensen had, indeed, a remarkable gift for making the eruptive, explosive thought and feeling of the great Silesian cobbler acceptable to the modern general reader, to common sense, and to comparatively orthodox Christian thought. Moreover, one of his main theses is extremely plausible and helpful for a broader understanding of the historical and theological problems at issue. As Martensen points out, perhaps more than any other Protestant thought of modern times, Boehme's theosophy filled the gaping breach which the Reformation had created between the subjective, soteriological, anthropological element of faith and the relatively neglected objective, theological dogma. Jacob Boehme bridged this gulf so successfully because his "theoretical mysticism" was—as all the best types of theosophy should be—at the same time a profound practical mysticism, *i.e.*, not only a "mysticism of the mind" but also, and even more so, a powerful "mysticism of the heart."

But, on other essential points, Mr. Hobhouse rightly questions whether Martensen's toning down of the excited and ecstatic utterance of Boehme does not go too far. He leaves, for instance, undecided whether Boehme's assumption of a "dark centre of nature," a morally neutral *Ungrund* in God, and Nicolas Berdyaev's acceptance of this teaching is not more inspired than Martensen's insistence on the more traditional, conservative view that God is "from the outset" pure Spirit "prior to nature" (pp. 72 f.), pure "Consummate Love" (p. 77) and Light, and that all other ideas of God do no justice to the fundamental postulates of the Christian ethics of love. In fact, Martensen's introduction of a distinction between "harmonious contrasts" and "hostile contradictions" (p. 84), which Boehme, in his opinion, dangerously neglected, and Martensen's teaching that "man is not the *direct* but the *inverted* image of God" (p. 87) are philosophically and theologically hardly acceptable attempts to smooth down the harshness of Boehme's profoundest religious experiences.

As the example of Boehme or that of Job and his friends may demonstrate, the unconditioned, unquestioning "ethical" glorification of God is not always evidence of the truer religious devotion; and it is rightly now more and more recognized that it was wisdom which prevented Christianity throughout the ages from yielding to the innumerable temptations of sentimentality to suppress the God of Wrath in the Old and New Testament in favor of the God of pure Love. To the historian of philosophy, further, numerous observations of Martensen on Kant (pp. 40, 118), on Bacon (pp. 22, 25), on the "7 *(sic)* sephiroth" of the Kabbalah (p. 124), and on the origin of the *Zohar* in the second century (p. 20), must appear definitely misleading.

Primarily, however, Martensen's whole attitude towards science in his "Epilogue" is so one-sided and so disturbingly oversimplified that, if generally accepted, it would do far more harm to the serious religious doubter than to any irreligious scientist; and by characterizing theosophy far too much as mere "knowledge," it undermines the deepest inner independence of just the greatest religious insights and emotions. This, however (and in his appendices to Martensen's work, the new editor does not seem to be unaware of this peril) would certainly be a dangerously high price to pay for the popularization of one of the greatest masters of religious thought in modern times.

David Baumgardt

The Library of Congress

The Philosophical Lectures of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Hitherto Unpublished. Edited by Kathleen Coburn. New York: Philosophical Library, 1949. 480 pp. $7.50.

"From December 14th, 1818, to March 29th, 1819, Coleridge delivered weekly, at the *Crown and Anchor Tavern* in the Strand a course of public lectures on the history of philosophy." Double tickets, admitting a Lady and Gentleman were three guineas; single tickets two guineas. These lectures were given on Monday evenings. At a like hour and in the same place, Coleridge was delivering an alternate series of lectures on Thursday evenings on the plays of Shakespeare. One can only marvel, in retrospect, at the versatility and catholicity of mind which could sustain so considerable a dual project at one and the same time. How could

a man shift his mental gears so abruptly? The answer is that no one but a Coleridge could do so.

As a financial venture the lectures were not a success. Box office receipts paid less than half the rental of space in the Tavern. The advance publicity was late and inadequate. Because of the period of national mourning at the time of the death of Queen Charlotte, the very first lecture had to be postponed, and the series got off to a bad start. A bank holiday interrupted the course once it was launched. In venturing this course Coleridge "hitched his wagon to a star." The proposed substance of it was a prophetic vote of confidence in the intelligence of the British public in general, and the actual substance a still more substantial vote of confidence in the small but loyal group of hearers who followed the course to its conclusion.

Miss Coburn hazards her guess as to reasons for the neglect of these lectures over a period of a hundred and twenty-five years. Coleridge lectured from notes. These passed in due time into the keeping of the British Museum, but were too sketchy for publication. Meanwhile, Hookham Frere had employed a professional reporter to take down the lectures at the time of their delivery. The resultant manuscript, corrected from the notes and by hypothetical emendation, furnishes the text for the present volume. The Frere manuscript passed from its sponsor to J. H. Green, and later on to members of the Coleridge family. It was known to be in existence, but was lost, to be eventually recovered only a few years ago in the back of a cupboard. The presumption is that the material, as originally assembled, was felt to be too unfinished for publication. And it is further suggested that those concerned were, perhaps, unwilling to stress Coleridge's concern for philosophy at the cost of diverting attention from his popularity and established reputation as a literary critic. In any case, the present editor has done a supremely successful job in bringing order out this confusion and breaking the silence of these many years.

From 1798 to 1817 Wilhelm Gottlieb Tennemann had published at Leipzig his *Geschicte der Philosophie*. Coleridge had eleven of the twelve volumes of this work available by the latter date. He made free and full use of them; indeed, that monumental work may have prompted him to make his own venture in the field. In any case, the lectures must be one of the first attempts in our English speaking world to write a "history of philosophy." Philosophers had always been known,

but had been dealt with as independent and even timeless individuals. Coleridge, however, construed philosophy "historically . . . as an essential part of the history of man." The total record is, therefore, that of an organic process with its theses and antitheses, its cause and effect. Coleridge says of Plato that the Dialogues are not a consistent and unified "Platonic" philosophy, but only the raw material for such a philosophy. He conceived his own task in the same terms. He never attempted or arrived at a philosophy of his own in these lectures, but held that he was getting out from the quarry of history rough stone for such an edifice.

It is doubtful whether any modern scholar, or even lay reader, will use these lectures today as a reliable and dispassionate textbook in the history of philosophy. Later historians have written much more objective works of this kind. Not that individual chapters are not suggestive and even valid. The lecture on Plato and Aristotle, for instance, is well worth thoughtful attention. But the main interest of the book lies in the intrusion of Coleridge's own vivid style and discursive imagination into the ongoing theme. Thus, his stress upon the element of "witty hilarity" in the Greek idea of *sophia,* or, again, upon his recurring insistence "that it is the business of the philosopher to desynonymize words originally equivalent." One gets here a reminiscent suggestion of the Coleridge-Wordsworth distinction between fancy and imagination. The authentic Coleridge crops out in a characteristic comment on the impossibility of fabricating an ecletic philosophy. Such an attempt is like "trying to make Helens from all the different beautiful women they were acquainted with; the nose from one, the eye from another, and the forehead from another, and in this manner they put together the lifeless fragments."

For the "secular" philosopher today, who no longer regards his discipline as a handmaid to the Queen of the Sciences, these lectures will seem vitiated by Coleridge's conviction that philosophers of the pre-Christian centuries were writing a proto-evangelion, and those of the Christian era elaborating and interpreting the Christian revelation.

But these idiosyncrasies do not detract from the interest and even the importance of this work as giving us further insight into the processes of Coleridge's mind. The lectures were in their conception and form a bold pioneering venture. The more adequate and accurate histories of these later years were matured on ground which Coleridge broke. And

his conception of the history of philosophy as a whole is stated in his parable of the beech tree:

> she retains the old leaves upon the tree through the winter till the new ones arise, and, as the slow buds prevail and push off the old ones, at the time their successors are already there to take their places. For be assured that dry leaves for human nature are better than mere nakedness.

This is the familiar Coleridge whom we know so well in other connections.

Hence the propriety, even the inevitability, of the sentence from Lecture IX, which Miss Coburn has chosen as a foreword, and perhaps as a text, for the entire volume: "But assuredly the way to improve the present is not to despise the past; it is a great error to idolize it, but a still greater one to hold it in contempt."

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A Short History of Existentialism. By JEAN WAHL. Translated by FORREST WILLIAMS and STANLEY MARON. New York: Philosophical Library, 1949. 58 pp. $2.75.

The Philosophy of Existence. By GABRIEL MARCEL. Translated by MANYA HARARI. New York: Philosophical Library, 1949. viii, 96 pp. $2.75.

The Perennial Scope of Philosophy. By KARL JASPERS. Translated by RALPH MANHEIM. New York: Philosophical Library, 1949. 188 pp. $3.00.

It is extremely unfortunate that a certain strain in philosophical thought which can be conveniently dated from the work of Kierkegaard, although its roots (as he well knew) actually go back to Kant, has been the subject of so much sensational discussion and, in the process, become neatly ticketed as "existentialism." This development is a misfortune for at least two reasons: first, because it gives the false impression that there actually is a well defined philosophy called "existentialism" to which a half-dozen thinkers who might be named are supposed to subscribe; and second, because the label "existentialism" has become so charged with explosive connotations that by now it is extremely difficult to understand and estimate the philosophy of existence in anything

even faintly approximating a "dispassionate" way. That this movement in philosophy must be reckoned with cannot be denied, as is clearly shown by the host of "refutations" which have appeared condemning its "dreadful" doctrines.[1] Whatever view one may take of this line of thought, and, indeed, there are good reasons for being sharply critical of it, no one who claims to be genuinely interested in the intellectual and spiritual situation of the present can reasonably fail to consider what the philosophy of existence has to say. It may be that more time should be given to understanding it than to refuting it, and that, instead of explaining it away, it would prove more fruitful for current philosophy to attempt to comprehend the human needs it tries to meet, and, even more generally, what is present in our culture which can give rise both to the problems dealt with by the philosophy of existence and its proposed solutions. It is, of course, impossible to take up these important tasks here, but they are, nevertheless, well worth the doing.

In attempting to treat the three present books, it will be necessary to make use of some convenient scheme and the following arrangement will be adopted: (1) An indication of the general contents of the books, together with their antecedents (they are all translations); (2) A brief discussion of a distinction basic to the philosophy of existence; (3) A comment on the relation between the philosophy of existence and religion.

1. Jean Wahl's *A Short History of Existentialism* is a translation from the French of what was originally a lecture delivered before a group of thinkers in France in 1946. The present version is a translation from a revision prepared by Wahl himself. In the space of some thirty pages the author presents an admirably clear account of the beginnings of the philosophy of existence in Kierkegaard, the development of basic ideas at the hands of Jaspers and Heidegger, and the current views of Sartre and his followers. In addition to the above, parts of the discussion following Wahl's lecture are included, and we thus have brief comments by Nicholas Berdyaev, Georges Gurwitch, Alexandre Koyré, Maurice Gandillac, Gabriel Marcel, Emmanuel Levinas, and Wahl himself. These remarks, though fragmentary, are interesting and throw further light on the relations between the thinkers touched on in the lecture.

1. See Wahl, p. 1, where he comments on various items of publicity accorded the philosophy of existence, and concludes, "the philosophy of existence has become, not only a European problem, but a world problem."

The short history is especially to be commended because, unlike much currently written on the subject, it starts in the right place, namely with Hegel, and shows how Kierkegaard's basic insights must be understood as a critique of and reaction against Hegel's logic of the *Idee*. Wahl mentions the influence of Kant (p. 8 and especially p. 54), and this is important in view of Kierkegaard's remark in his *Journal*, "Kant is my philosopher." In addition Wahl touches on influences in Kierkegaard's background often omitted, particularly that of Schelling and his "metaphysical empiricism." Nevertheless, the thought of Hegel remains central, and it is not too much to say that the basic insights of *Existenz* cannot be grasped unless what Kierkegaard was reacting against in philosophic thought is clearly understood. This requires, of course, that we know our Hegel as well as he did, which was, on the whole, very well indeed.

Wahl is quite right in going on to interpret the work of Jaspers and Heidegger as the translation of the "reflections of Kierkegaard into more intellectual terms" (p. 9); although it might be more accurate, in view of the fact that, as anyone acquainted with the *Postscript* knows, Kierkegaard's existential dialectic is couched in "intellectual terms" clearly enough, to say that these two thinkers transformed his reflections into a positive system of philosophy (and, in the case of Heidegger at least, even into an ontology of existence, see pp. 11 ff.). One can well agree with Berdyaev's comment (p. 35) that Wahl's account of Heidegger is "astoundingly clear," and this adds greatly to the value of the book. In speaking of Jaspers and Heidegger together in relation to Kierkegaard, Wahl has not clearly brought out some significant differences. In the ensuing discussion, Berdyaev's point (pp. 35 f.) to the effect that Jaspers is infinitely closer to Kierkegaard than Heidegger is must not be overlooked, for the kind of ontology which the latter tries to construct represents just the sort of systematizing which Kierkegaard rejected.

It may reasonably be asked whether Wahl is correct in saying, "the idea of Possibility, though used by Kierkegaard, Jaspers and Heidegger, is nowhere made precise, except perhaps in the work of Sartre" (p. 26). However it may be with Jaspers and Heidegger, it is certainly wrong to speak as though Kierkegaard had not written so intricately of possibility in the *Fragments* (Eng. tr. pp. 59 ff., cf. his reference to this treatment in the *Postcript*, Eng. tr. pp. 306-7).

The papers by Gabriel Marcel, collected together under the general

title, *The Philosophy of Existence,* represent both a significant criticism of Sartre, and a statement of that form of "Christian existentialism" to which Marcel himself subscribes. The paper, "On the Ontological Mystery" (1933), as the author says, "explains the main lines of my position, which have not changed since that time" (p. vii), and "Testimony and Existentialism" (1946) represents Marcel's attempt to make clear the extent of his own "existentialism" at a time when the label was no doubt being wildly used in France to cover a multitude of ideas and thinkers. Over against these two papers stands the longest paper, "Existence and Human Freedom" (1946), which is an excellent exposition of Sartre (particularly certain parts of *La Nausée* and *L'Etre et la Néant),* together with a running criticism of what Marcel regards as Sartre's *nihilism.* Thus we have, as Marcel himself says (no doubt partly in justification of the papers selected), "a kind of dyptych showing the two aspects of the contemporary existentialist school in France" (p. vii).

The book of Karl Jaspers, *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy,* is a translation, and in some places a very bad one,[2] of *Der philosophische Glaube* (although this is nowhere mentioned either in the book or on the jacket), a series of lectures all but one of which were delivered at Basel in July 1947. It is a curious combination of old ideas refurbished and original insights, the profundity of which cannot be denied. Jaspers sets out to define that faith which is the root of philosophy and to indicate its fundamental contents, and then goes on to deal with such themes as man, the relations between religion and philosophy, and the task of

2. Space does not permit detailed support of this contention, but the following may be singled out: (p. 89) did the word "exclusivity" have to be coined here?; (p. 26) the first sentence at the top makes no sense in English, whereas Jasper's sentence (Ger. p. 27) makes tolerable sense; *Dasein* which is justifiably enough translated as "being there" in most places suddenly becomes "subsists" (p. 34), and whatever this term means it is not *Dasein* (cf. pp. 139, 140, where *Dasein* becomes "empirical existence," which is alright except that it makes "subsists" even less defensible); (p. 57) certainly something more clear than "nonknowledge" can be found for *Nichtwissen;* (p. 81) the significant distinction between *Akt* and *Tun* should be brought out; (p. 104) "the specific religion of Christ" is not adequate for *Christusreligion;* (pp. 137, 153) "fundament" for *Boden* or *Grund* is impossible in view of the geographical and anatomical (!) meaning of the word; (p. 143) for *sinnlich* and *unsinnlich,* "sensible" and "non-sensible," are required rather than "sensuous" and 'asensual" with their wholly different connotations; (p. 149) the sentence beginning "Ontology, even . . ." is a confusion, and readers must be referred to Jaspers' text (Ger. p. 130); (p. 150) in view of the Kantianism of Jaspers, "formal logic" cannot be wholly satisfactory for *Logik des Verstandes.*

future philosophy. One of the most interesting sections, "Philosophy and Anti-Philosophy," contains a stimulating discussion of three forms of what Jaspers calls *Unphilosophie,* nihilism, deification of man, and demonology, and his critique of some current perversions of philosophy is very good indeed.

2. Since it is impossible to direct attention here to all the noteworthy points in each of the books, it will be necessary to select one point and concentrate on it. If there is any one idea which several philosophers of existence might be said to have in common, it is some form of the distinction between truth *theoretical* and truth *existential,* the former involving disinterest, detachment, and objectivity in the proper sense of the term, while the latter is intimately bound up with the person and requires interest, participation, and individual human purpose. Marcel puts the difference in terms of the *attitude* of the knower in inquiry; Jaspers finds it in the stake which the person has in what he apprehends. For the latter, this appears in his distinction between truths with which the person identifies himself and for which, if need be, he is ready to die, and truths which stand without the person as universally valid because based on some objective warrant.

That the attitude of the knower is all-important for Marcel is shown by the following extract:

> Just as long as my attitude towards reality is that of someone who is not involved in it, but who judges it his duty to draw up its minutes as exactly as possible (and this is by definition the attitude of the scientist), I am justified in maintaining in regard to it a sort of principle of mistrust, which in theory is unlimited in its application; . . .
>
> It would indeed be a profound illusion to believe that I can still maintain this same attitude when I undertake an inquiry, say, into the value of life; it would be a paralogism to suppose that I can pursue such an inquiry as though my own life were not at issue (p. 17).

It is interesting to compare this with the distinction of Jaspers between truths by which one lives, and truths which one can prove: "A truth by which I live stands only if I become identical with it; it is historical in form . . . a truth which I can prove, stands without me; it is universally valid, unhistorical . . . (p. 4). In whatever form this distinction is put, it is certainly basic to the philosophy of existence. Its roots are to be found in Kierkegaard's "existential dialectic" and in his idea of the

"subjective thinker." Wahl (pp. 3 ff.) correctly singles out, in this connection, the peculiar subjectivism of Kierkegaard as a point at which the latter reacted against Hegel and the whole tradition dedicated to the philosophy of "Essence."

3. The relation of the philosophy of existence to religion is a theme requiring lengthy discussion just because it is so perplexing; it is only the obvious facts which present no difficulties. Kierkegaard was, of course, a definitely Christian thinker, and today his primary importance is as a theologian. Sartre and his followers certainly cannot be said to have a religious orientation in any obvious sense of the term, although, despite their avowed atheism, there is a non-obvious, but philosophically defensible, sense in which the sort of problem they deal with could be said to be religious in nature. Jaspers, as is more clearly shown in his lecture on the "Contents of Philosophical Faith" than in the section on "Philosophy and Religion," is much closer to the Judeo-Christian tradition than is Heidegger, although here one would do well to take seriously what is implied in Wahl's very discerning question: "Could it be that if Heidegger were completely free of his religious presuppositions, he would cease to be Heidegger?" (p. 25).

The root of the difficulty in making a clear pronouncement on the present subject should be fairly obvious. First, the relations between philosophy, in any guise or of any type, and religion have invariably been very close, and there are periods in history when they can be distinguished only with great effort. If this is the case, then *a fortiori* a philosophy of existence concentrating on man's concern for his place in the world and his destiny will present an even greater problem of discrimination. Secondly, the aim of philosophy as envisaged by some existential philosophers is very close to that of religion, and it is my opinion that the philosophy of existence is more in accord with the concerns of religion and theology than with those of philosophy. Such a contention could be supported from the words of Jaspers: "Our enduring task in philosophical endeavor is to become authentic men by becoming aware of being;—or, and this is the same thing: to become ourselves by achieving certainty of God" (p. 166). How this differs from at least a part of the aim of religious faith might be difficult to say, and it is interesting to note that, immediately following this characterization, Jaspers goes on to confine many of the undisputed tasks of philosophy to the "philosophical craft" *(der philosophische Handwerk)*, implying that

they are something less than genuine philosophy, and indeed they must be so regarded if genuine philosophy is attempting to perform the work of religion.

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Kierkegaard und der Verführer. By WALTER REHM. Munich: Verlag Hermann Rinn, 1949. 620 pp.

This compendious commentary is a highly valuable attempt to bring Kierkegaard's work and person close to the understanding of even completely unprepared readers. It chooses as key Kierkegaard's concept of the seducer comprising the erotic seducer as well as the highly spiritual "seducers," Socrates and Christ. The point they have in common is the indirectness of approach.

The finesse of the erotic seducer lies in causing his victim to behave as the seducer wants her to behave, while performing his fraud so skilfully that she is persuaded to act absolutely spontaneously even against the seducer's will. The tacit psychological presupposition is that the seducer wants to enjoy the victim's love and resistance but knows that real love cannot be forced. Kierkegaard described this maneuver in a masterly way in his *Diary of the Seducer,* and it is possible that this book reflects his own behavior toward his former fiancée, Regina Olsen.

It seems to me that Mr. Rehm does not do justice to Kierkegaard's highly refined psychology of the erotic. It is not a harmless compound of freedom of choice among many possibilities, of poetic illusions, power, anxiety, natural immediacy, the "interesting," and so on, which the erotic seducer tries to enjoy; but it is the increase of lust, the very principle of eroticism, which he deliberately cultivates. Accordingly, his sin is not only that he thereby misuses another person, degrading her to a mere stimulus and tool of his own enjoyment. What Kierkegaard aims at is nothing less than a psychological justification of the Christian definition of sexual lust itself as sin, for the most refined perversions of the seducer function as a magnifying glass; perversions are exaggerations of the normal. And the attitude of normal sex lust is the self-surrender of the spiritual existence of man to the impersonal animal *id.* It is passivity, also of the male; spirit, however, is activity. The seducer does not enjoy his own power and anxiety, but indirectly, namely by empathy,

he enjoys the powerlessness and anxiety of his victim; speaking in modern term, it is masochism by empathy. And it is the deep knowledge of sexual lust as the fall of man that lies at the base of the biblical condemnation of sex. Animals cannot sin, because they are nothing but animals. Man is more and, therefore, what is innocent and natural with animals is a shame for him.

The seducer appears on a distinctly higher level in the person of Socrates. He shares with the erotic seducer the indirectness of communication. By his maieutic irony, he derives the disciple to free and spontaneous appropriation of knowledge. He does not teach directly that this and that is so. Why? Because such a method would not bring the disciple to the real understanding of knowledge.

Real love cannot be forced, just as real understanding cannot be enforced. All a teacher can do is to bring the disciple through contradictions to the point where he comprehends the truth by himself.

Again, I think that Mr. Rehm misses the point by emphasizing too much the psychological peculiarities at the expense of doing justice to the real philosophical problems that haunted both Socrates and Kierkegaard. This problem, namely the radical distinction made between *episteme* and *doxa,* that is, between the understanding of ideas and the cognizance of facts, cannot be brought into the context of Hegelianism, whose dialectical principle still dominates Mr. Rehm's thinking—in spite of Kierkegaard's vehement antagonism to it.

If even Christ is included in the ranks of "seducers," it may be understood in accord with the "fishers of men" of the Gospel. But what Kierkegaard is aiming at, is more. Again, it cannot be understood as a psychologically interesting peculiarity that drives Kierkegaard to such a view, but as a very serious attempt to answer a fundamental problem of theology. The problem is the peculiarity of religious knowledge through faith and not through direct awareness, which means that faith is the response to God's necessarily only indirect communication. We cannot see God, we cannot hear and touch Him. If we could, God would not be God, but a physical something. God cannot reveal Himself to us directly. For whatever He does, and even when He speaks to us with a thunderous voice and appears in gigantic dimensions, we can still shrug our shoulders and smile, thinking, "What skilful ventriloquist and what ingenious devices are behind all these 'miracles'?" The true divine author cannot be seen but only guessed or inferred. Our only real contact with God is in faith and not by direct awareness, as we are aware of

all the things of our physical, biological, and psychical world. God is so completely different from everything else that, even if we are aware of Him, our awareness contradicts all our expectations, since the content of this awareness is beyond any definite thing we are accustomed to consider as real. It is analogous to the direct psychological experience of someone told to close his senses and perform the introspective view. At first he will meet with absolute emptiness, for he expects to perceive something of the kind he is accustomed to call real, namely, something sensuous, spatially extended, or physical. It is as if someone would expect to hear colors or to see sounds and then does not find either. It depends on looking in the right direction, and nobody can be told directly how to do this. He must trust the statements of others, he must first have faith, and he must will. Faith is a matter of will. This alone renders faith a merit. But will is free. Nobody can be forced to will—just as little as he can be forced to love or to get understanding knowledge. Nevertheless, it is possible to bring a person into the proper condition and the right position from which he can perform the last and indispensable step to love, understanding, and will—spontaneously. God cannot force man to be morally good, for freedom is the prerequisite of morality. But God can *persuade* man to moral goodness. How? In the same way as parents educate their children, namely, by giving a good example themselves. And this is exactly the meaning of the basic Christian imperative: Follow Me! And in order to become capable of doing so, we must first believe in the divinity of Christ; more than that, we must have become one with Christ in order to be capable of behaving and acting as Christ did and would do in our own present situation.

This is my own interpretation, and not that of Mr. Rehm, of Kierkegaard's concept of the indirect communication of Christ as "seducer." I distrust thoroughly the irrationalistic interpretation of Kierkegaard's philosophy, to my knowledge first introduced by the psychiatrist, Karl Jaspers, and elaborately expanded by Heidegger and his followers. I regret that Mr. Rehm could not keep his excellent and very instructive book free from these influences. To me, Plato and Aristotle are still closer to the truth than the refinements of the psychiatrically and dialectically determined manners of recent thinking, and I believe that Kierkegaard himself would have called them very interesting but not more—not true.

MAXIMILIAN BECK

Central College

Mass Man and Religion. By E. G. Lee. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949. 160 pp. $2.50.

Mr. Lee's opening words, "Two world wars have begun in Europe. Why in Europe?" establish the locus but hardly the problem of this penetrating analysis of the predicament of modern Western man and his traditional religion, Christianity. There is little to say against the thesis that the religion of contemporary man is nationalism, and that the issue of European efforts to make particular nationalisms universal has been global strife. But that war in the East (and war in the West "under certain conditions") can be "insulated and isolated" does not seem to follow from the implication that these peoples are not impregnated with the same ideologies. The facts of control, it would appear, have been precisely in the lack of the same amount of political, economic, and technical power in these areas. Recent events in Korea, Tibet, and Indo-China would certainly indicate that, given economic and technical support, Asiatic wars may not remain insulated and isolated.

However, the burden of the author's argument is the disintegration of Western man's idea of the Absolute God, the illusion of salvation through community, the dependence of community upon the political state, and the consequent totemistic nature of the state. He continues with an evaluation of Christianity in an historical and contemporary reference and, finally, states what he sees as clear and positive directives for restoring the sense of an Absolute God.

The failure of Christianity is seen to be on two levels: Intellectually traditional theism is not satisfactory, and Western man tries to substitute for it "all sorts of social concepts and actions"; morally (and, Kantian-wise, this is the more crucial problem) the official Christian doctrine of asceticism regarding labor and sex can only be ignored in accepting the facts that "leisure is something to be enjoyed 'in this world' " and that "sex can be enjoyed for its own sake." Morality unsanctified by religion leaves man "with no tolerable place in a significant universe." The state takes the place of institutional religious life.

The state, however, is a myth "willed into being by men." The inadequacy of the myth is not only in its origin in the "thin mysticism of community" but, more, in the fact that it points to nothing beyond the state. Internationalism is spiritually empty, and the fears of un-

protected and solitary existence drive men to seek roots in ideologies which actually perform their function of a binding community only in times of war. Morality, too, serves only to maintain what exists. The necessity of the hour is an effort of faith—"an effort of the human spirit to comprehend the intangibly real." It is a way into the future and must be taken by an individual or individuals willing to "commit an 'act of progress and impiety' in order that the world should be saved."

The Christian myth, as well as all other myths, mediates truth. When myths become absolute they render themselves relative. Faith now demands that the Christ be indentified with God and a new relation be established with myths other men have held sacred. Christianity has developed geographically isolated from other high religions and now must face and investigate them for the truths they hold. "At some point the Christian myth must be adjusted to include those who cannot accept it" (p. 125). An esoteric retreat will not meet the problem, nor can the old Absolute perform its once creative role. To understand what reality reveals to any age

> demands an attitude of mind deeper than that of tolerance; it demands the spiritual ability openly to criticize what seems so precious; to believe and at the same time to criticize belief without feeling there is any spiritual treachery in this. It means a poise of the spirit, a withholding of conviction from what is obviously temporal, and yet a reserve of conviction flung into what is eternal and universal (p. 157).

"God calls and drives. Man listens and is willingly or unwillingly driven" (p. 155).

Mr. Lee states forcefully and with great insight the position religion today faces. His book should stir (if read) great opposition from traditional Christians, at least a challenge from humanists, and suppression from statists. That it will not can mean one of three things: its message can be ignored as "its hour has not yet come"; European masses have been so repeatedly disappointed in their hopes that an effort of faith demanding such discipline is not physically and psychologically possible; or masses of men are so aware of its truth as to accept a statement of it, especially from a lay churchman, with satisfaction and encouragement.

The greatest weakness in the book is that, in the urgency of the contemporary problem, the author either does not see or ignores the

continuous precariousness of man's existence. A cursory glance at history would reveal that man has never been for any length of time as integrated and established as so many writers would like to picture him. Even Henry Adams had to deny his thesis of unity in *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres.*

A reader should be warned that the 160 pages of this British printed book would represent almost twice that length in a book from an American press. The reading is not easy nor the diction fluent, but the book well deserved the award of £10,000 given it by the United Nations Literary Competition.

MARY EDITH RUNYAN

These Also Believe. By CHARLES S. BRADEN. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949. xv, 491 pp. $6.00.

The chief value of this volume lies in its firsthand accounts of the Peace Mission Movement of Father Divine, Psychiana, and the I Am Movement. Of these three the first is by far the most significant. Professor Braden's description of his own experience at the banquet of Father Divine and his interpretation of the aims and operation of the movement make a real contribution to American sociology. He has also added some new materials concerning recent developments in New Thought, Unity School of Christianity, the Liberal Catholic Church, Spiritualism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Anglo-Israel, and The Oxford Group Movement (Moral Re-Armament). All these movements are relatively minor and the accounts of them here given are adequate, at least for most readers. But Theosophy, Christian Science, and Mormonism are movements of larger scope and greater historical proportions, which can hardly be described adequately within the limits of a survey of "minority movements." However, even in the case of these more substantial movements, the accounts, as far as they go, are informative and judicious.

Over and above Professor Braden's narratives, which cannot well be reviewed in brief space, this volume invites comment on the general theory of religion. The author puts an interesting problem quite succinctly in his title by referring to the "also believing." No reader will fail to note the contrast between the kind of tolerant, inquisitive, critical belief illustrated by the religious faith of the author, and the exuberant, exclusive convictions and commitments characteristic of the great majority of the members of these movements. Which is closer

to religious faith? The problem is not so simple, for many of these "cults" or "movements" explicitly repudiate religion. They do not regard themselves as "also believers," as having one faith among many, but as the champions of truth in a benighted world. To possess a revelation carries them beyond the pale of those who live by faith and makes them missionaries of divine truth, prophets of the Will of God. Several of the movements wish to be understood not as religious, but as scientific, or rather, as extensions of science into the realm of religious faith. This note is sounded repeatedly in Psychiana, New Thought, Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritualism. The "Universal Psychic Science" of the Gerlings of Rochester, N. Y., expresses the pretensions of many of these cults. (Professor Braden says the Gerlings' movement is "definitely Spiritualist," though his account of it hardly suggests such a connection.) To pretend to be "scientific" rather than "religious" is not a merely verbal matter; it means that the prophets of these movements do not wish to establish little "cults" or to emphasize the cultus which makes them distinctive, they wish to prove to mankind that they have discovered ultimate and all-important truth, the knowledge of which must become universal.

Like Christianity when it was newly born, these prophetic movements and mysteries repudiate "organized religion" and profess a universality of vision or revelation, which when accepted will make the conventional forms of religion obsolete. The Liberal Catholic Church and Mormonism are the chief exceptions to this rule; in them cultus, tradition, and "organized religion" are primary traits and essential products of the faith. Even so biblical a group as Jehovah's Witnesses "deny indignantly that their movement is religious" (p. 358). "Organized religion stands exposed as being not of the Lord God." This proclamation many of these groups are willing to make in common. The Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith, too, began his career with this discovery. How are we to interpret such anti-clericalism? Is it merely "sectarianism run wild," or is it a symptom that religion has in it always the power to burst its man-made bonds? If these movements are not religious, what are they? If religion is to be identified with "organized religion," how account for the initial impetus and compelling life force in any living faith?

Most of the traits of most of these movements are not novel to Christianity. Gnosticism, spirit communication, communion banquets, healing power, all appeared early and often in Christian history. Therefore, what is most significant in these movements is not *"what* they teach,"

for their doctrines are usually variations on old themes, but *how* they believe, and Professor Braden has done well to make the quality of belief a primary object of his investigation. Here it is difficult to generalize, for any movement has all kinds of believers in it. Nevertheless, the frequent expressions in these movements of disillusionment, of religious discontent, of the failures of church and state to provide a sincere stimulus to faith, make them important, even if not eloquent, witnesses to the inadequacies of organized Christianity. If all sectarianism is to be interpreted as such witnessing, these movements may well be "sectarianism run wild." But I suspect that there is something quite nonsectarian in these anti-religious religions, something post-Christian. They suggest an analogy with the days when Christianity itself was a wild little cult, when religious experimentation was everywhere visible, when new faiths were born which, after centuries of experimentation, settled down to being "organized" churches. There is an inherent, native wildness in all belief when it is most faithful, and the study of present-day bewilderment is not a mere curiosity, but an attempt at diagnosis: What is genuinely prophetic in these "movements"?

Professor Braden realizes that the great majority of such movements are ephemeral, more or less personal creatures. When faiths like Mormonism, Theosophy, and Christian Science outlive their little day as prophetic movements and become themselves "organized" religions and societies, they find a place, somehow, in the universal history of far-from-universal religions. They become "also believers." But in their initial heat and inspiration, they wear a radically different aspect. This volume is most precious where it preserves for us (as especially in the cases of the first three movements mentioned) the raw, wild, spontaneous convictions by which men from time to time become possessed, and which create new forces of social life and passion.

HERBERT W. SCHNEIDER

Columbia University

The Religious Revolt against Reason. By L. HAROLD DEWOLF. New York; Harper and Brothers, 1949. 217 pp. $2.50.

The time was ripe for this book. Since Arthur E. Murphy's *The Uses of Reason* (1943), a book which trained heavy guns on irrationalism, religious and otherwise, there has been no adequate defense of reason.

In recent years the attack upon reason in religion has come from many sources; the words neo-orthodoxy and existentialism now extend to many forms of the same revolt against reason. To the names of Barth, Brunner, Kierkegaard, and Reinhold Niebuhr may be added many other leaders of theological thought in this country and abroad.

Dr. DeWolf, Professor of Systematic Theology in Boston University School of Theology, organizes his defense of reason as a valid criterion of religious truth by concentrating on Kierkegaard's critique of reason. This study is admirable not only by virtue of the logical and clear-cut organization of material, the style which makes every page a pleasure, and the emotional dignity which pervades the whole, but also, and in particular, by virtue of the care which DeWolf takes to state the case of the "revolters." A reader who has not already been introduced to this irrationalistic movement in theology may here find the grounds for the revolt forcefully presented and related to each other in two chapters which create sympathy for the revolters. There follow two chapters, "Reason's Defense" and "Objections to Irrationalism," and then a final chapter in which the claims of reason and faith are wedded to each other. DeWolf has given us a meaty sample of much-needed philosophical and theological thinking and writing—impassioned objectivity and fearless analysis and synopsis.

DeWolf's main thesis is that once we understand the real nature of reason, that is, once we give up the conception of reason as abstract logical certainty, or as induction restricted to sense, we may have adequate trust in its capacity to guide us to religious (and any other kind of) truth. What, then, does DeWolf mean by reason, the reason which the revolters never adequately appreciate? It is "a person thinking" (p. 124) about "all the data which experience can provide" (p. 128). "Reason demands wholeness and must therefore insist upon the most comprehensive view of the world which can be attained by any means whatsoever," including religious sensitivity (p. 129). Reason demands that doctrines be consistent with evidence, "the taking into account of all data available" (p. 182), in a phrase, "unlimited comprehensive coherence" (p. 197). "Those who employ the test of truth try every hypothesis for both consistency with, and relevance to, all possible observed data and previously adopted theories" (p. 197).

This particular conception of reason, as more than logical coherence among propositions, as the unification of experience as a whole by

imaginative hypotheses which are constantly modifiable by the growth of experience and knowledge, is a distinguishing feature of the philosophy of E. S. Brightman, a teacher to whom the author expresses his indebtedness. This conception of truth does not arbitrarily reject religious experience, or any other experience; priority is given to experience as a whole, and no one part of experience, such as sense-perception, or logic, or mystical experience, is the controlling factor in interpretation. Thus, religious and moral insights of the "revolters" and any others are not summarily dismissed. Nor are they given validity independent of the support they receive from, and give to, the remainder of human experience!

DeWolf applies this conception of truth brilliantly in the defense of reason against all irrationalists. What is particularly interesting to this reviewer is the supposed use of this conception of reason against what Professor DeWolf regards as the irrationalism in Brightman's own treatment of the problem of evil and in Brightman's hypothesis of a finite God. There is no space here to consider DeWolf's noteworthy criticisms of the hypothesis of the Given which Brightman tenders as a more coherent interpretation of the non-disciplinary evil in the world than is the traditional hypothesis of an omnipotent God. But it seems to this reviewer that DeWolf's objections ultimately take root in a conception of reason which is, in fact, different from the one Professor Brightman advocates. Thus the question may be raised: Has Professor DeWolf actually slipped away from this conception of reason at certain points in his criticism?

When Professor DeWolf says: "To believe that by reason we may know God does imply that the world is a system" (p. 132), is he thinking of a rationalistically organized whole? Does he think that reason itself dictates the nature of the system? If so, this is hardly empirical coherence. When he warns that "the rationalist may be tempted to think of God as confined to the limits of man's actual knowledge" (p. 169), or when he says, "can the religious thinker content himself with a lesser intellectual humility when confronted by the illimitable mystery and power of Him who has made all things" (p. 170), is he being consistent with the spirit of empirical coherence? For empirical coherence, as opposed to logical coherence, as he well says, simply seeks "a conclusion which will make sense in relation to all relevant data" (p. 209). Empirical coherence, as the writer understands it, *cannot imply* that the world

is a system, at least *any particular kind* of system. It knows nothing ahead of time, either of mystery or of divine power; it organizes the data before it by hypotheses consistent with experience we have actually had. If it reaches a hypothesis about God consistent with the tradition, it is, in fact, suggesting that the world is *one* kind of system and *not* another, not the kind represented by conceptions of a finite God from Plato to Brightman, Montague, and Whitehead.

If one is empirically coherent, then, his hypothesis about God must be confined to actual knowledge, whether he is thinking about God or life on Mars. He cannot assume what DeWolf seems to assume at this point (because he is convinced that the universe is a certain kind of system), that non-disciplinary surd evils, contrary to Brightman's view, will, when we know more, be seen as instrumental good (p. 172). His loyalty must be to the best interpretation of the facts now before him, and his humility is not to be censured because he cannot now understand how God can use surd evil to good and still be omnipotent (pp. 173-74). His conception of God is the hypothesis which will account for the facts *here* and *now;* when those facts and relevant considerations change, when (to be specific) he has more ground than he has now for seeing how God uses surd evil for good, *then and only then* can he change his hypothesis. He cannot assume, as DeWolf believes he must assume, "an inherent kinship" (p. 176) between one conception of a meaningful universe and reality itself.

The brief discussion above may serve to accent the need which this book helps so much to fill, the necessity for further discussion of the meaning of reason in its relation to faith, and the avoidance of the assumption that reason, whatever it is, cannot be the guide to religious truth.

PETER A. BERTOCCI

Boston University

BOOK NOTES

Ignis Divinus: Le feu comme moyen de rajeunissement et d'immortalité; contes, légendes, mythes, et rites. By CARL-MARTIN EDSMAN. Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1949. 307 pp. 13 kr.

This book is not only a thorough study of one idea, in the course of which every available area of folklore, legend, myth, tale, and rite is ransacked, but it is also a capital demonstration in methodology, which will be of great value to the student who reads it carefully. The *idea* is that of the renewal of life by means of fire, and the book begins with the hundred-year-old theory of Raoul-Rochette that the Heracles of Tyre underwent an annual death on a funeral pyre, followed by a resurrection [*egersis*] and new life. The support for this idea was found by Raoul-Rochette in his interpretation of the reliefs depicting a funeral pyre in connection with Heracles. This was an evidence of the close relation between Phoenicia, indeed Asia, and Greece, since there was no question of the identity of the Greek and the Phoenician Heracles. The next step was to connect the idea with Plato's myth of Er the Armenian—and even with Croesus, Sandan, and Dido! The next step was to explain Heracles (thus interpreted) as a vegetation deity—so Frazer, Robertson, Smith, Cumont, von Baudissin, Dussaud, and others. The god Sandan was thus supposed to be burned periodically in effigy at Tarsus—Dussaud goes to the length of saying that Heracles-Sandan was the god annually burned. Even the god Baal has been supposed to be regenerated annually by fire!

But the only Greek writer who refers to the idea is Nonnos, in his *Dionysiaca* (XL, 394-98), ca. A.D. 500!—Nonnos, whose crazy *mélange* of mythology and private fancy must be used with the utmost circumspection in dealing with any Greek myth whatsoever. What Nonnos says is as follows:

> On thy fragrant altar, that thousand-year-old wise bird the phoenix lays sweet-smelling woods with his curved claw, bringing the end of one life and the beginning of another; for there he is born again, self-begotten, the image of equal time renewed—he sheds old age in the fire, and from the fire takes in exchange youthful bloom (W. H. D. Rouse's tr., in Loeb Classical Library, III.183).

This is not Heracles or Sandan or Melkart or Croesus or Dido at all—but the phoenix! And so, as the *idea* is traced back all the way to Babylon and India, and down through the Middle Ages in Western Europe, it turns out that it is not one cult or cult-principle only that contributes to the transmission and spread of the figure, but many. In fact, it is little more than a figure of speech—or rather of thought—whereby the notion of renewal is set forth in more than one connection: one almost expects to find here Omar's lines,

> . . . and in the fire of Spring
> Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling; . . .

In the second place, the work is directed against the popular notion that, since rites precede myths and theologies, therefore rite provides a sounder

clue to the meanings of religious beliefs than the latter can ever provide. But legends often create or recreate rites and ceremonies; and beliefs certainly do so, in even greater degree. A religious idea can give birth to a religious drama, and a spoken legend can become a ritual legend—or even detach itself from the drama and circulate as an independent tale. And there is no "law" by which this either must be repeated or must not. What we have to guard ourselves against is the notion that every legend is in origin an ancient ritual legend or bears within itself the germ of a drama (see pp. 38 f.).

The book concludes with a 23-page bibliography which will be a help to the student of folklore and myths.

FREDERICK C. GRANT

Die geheime Schutzgottheit von Rom. By ANGELO BRELICH. (Albae Vigiliae, Neue Folge, Heft VI.) Zürich: Rhein Verlag, 1949. 65 pp. S. Fr. 8.

This essay is not an attempt to identify the mysterious tutelary deity of Rome whose name might not be communicated. Its identity is essentially a mystery, which it would not be if it were susceptible to specific solution. What Brelich attempts is to overhear the heart-beat of the mystery by examining a series of obscure native Roman cults which bear some analogy to the little we know of the nameless tutelary deity. In such cults as those of the Genius, Fortuna, Pales, Diana Nemorensis, Juno Sospita, Acca Larentia, Ops Consivia, and Diana Angerona he finds a common denominator in their combination of a male and female principle, and he deduces that such a combination (suggested in the ritual phrase *sive deus sive dea*) is the essential characteristic of the tutelary deity. What its worshippers desiderated for Rome was persistence in prosperity, and in the racial subconscious persistence is inextricably bound up with origins, whose seeds, indeed, are the only guarantee of persistence. Seeds of origin naturally involve a combination of male and female principles, and the tutelary diety is then a paramount expression of an archetypal urge of which the various other cults mentioned are also expressions.

Traditional criticism might object that evidence arbitrarily plucked from sources widely disparate in time and place, and sometimes from authors of very dubious reliability, is woven into a web as tenuous as it is capricious, and that, in the case of certain deities, well established factors are ignored while vague hints are elaborated. The author is aware of these objections (pp. 50 f.), but insists that the basic human urges are both timeless and of greater significance than the consciously elaborated cults for which evidence is clear and ample. Skeptical spectators of Picasso's disjointed eyes remember uneasily that the man can draw, and Brelich's easy and critical familiarity with his sources make it plain that his deviations from orthodoxy are deliberate. If nothing else, his method makes the study of ancient religion not an insulated pastime for specialists but an avenue for the better understanding of man. From that point of view the present study and the series of which it is a part are surely to be applauded.

MOSES HADAS

Vesta. By Angelo Brelich. (Albae Vigiliae, Neue Folge, Heft VII.) Zürich: Rhein Verlag, 1949. 120 pp. S. Fr. 9.50.

As in his earlier *Die geheime Schutzgottheit von Rom,* Professor Brelich's present work seeks to explain a central element in Roman religion by archetypal concepts. The cult of Vesta, which appears to be autochthonous in Latium and of pre-Roman origin, is of peculiar and characteristic importance in the Roman state. Vesta is not anthropomorphic, not because of a lag in development but inherently; she is the empirical incarnation of a "view" which is an amalgam of various concepts, definite and yet not so rationalized as to be capable of crystalline definition or systematization. With erudition and acumen Professor Brelich combs antiquity for various associations which are components in the "view" of Vesta. She is connected with Janus, not as a divine "pair" but as marking the circle of the year, which is without beginning or end. Her shrine is not an inaugurated *templum;* its characteristic circularity reflects the undivided heaven and so corresponds to a pre-cosmic situation. She is connected with the elements (in the sense of the pre-Socratics) of fire and water, with chthonian aspects, and with Fortuna. She is thought of as at once maid and mother; as such she requires a masculine complement, and hence her association with the *penates.* She has a special connection with flour milling and bread.

The complex of abstractions which Vesta embodies (and Brelich's approach and method) is best illustrated by the symbol of the ass, which is her peculiar sacred animal. The symbolism of the ass is cosmic in scope: its name is applied to the revolving upper millstone, properly *meta; meta* is also the similarly shaped pillar which marked the turn in the hippodrome, where the races represented the course of the sun; *meta* (or ass) is thus a fixed point about which things rotate; the ass's period of gestation is precisely a year; it is notoriously phallic; the mill also has phallic symbolism; the mill is essential to man's principal food. The fusion of these symbols makes Vesta represent the essentials of life —the orderly universe, generation, sustenance. As an amalgam of these concepts she cannot be given specific human form, though her priestesses represent aspects of her meaning and she is sufficiently personalized to be mythologized in various aspects.

If it be objected that this construction rests on subjective fantasy, it must be observed that Professor Brelich has built a bridgehead of solid scholarship for his leap into the dark. And if his construction is not capable of proof, neither can it be positively disproved. It does offer a highly suggestive, if not at all points compelling, solution to the central mystery of Roman religion and to the wider mystery of how amorphous urges in the unconscious took such shape as to make man at home in his universe.

Moses Hadas

Twilight in India. By Gervée Baronte. New York: The Philosophical Library. 1949. xix, 382 pp. $3.75.

The author commences with a blunt, unrestrained, vicious attack upon Hinduism and its adherents, putting unrelieved emphasis upon the unlovely and

primitive aspects of that religion and its people. Having thus created an atmosphere, she proceeds to discuss Hinduism. Her ethnographical items are scrappy, and inadequate for general use. For her, the origin of Hinduism is in South India. For the contemporary scene, two or three quotations may be made. On Mr. Gandhi: "He preached austerity to untouchables. They understand austerity. They are used to hunger." Of his own practice of austerity: "Gandhi offered a good example to the people by always travelling in a third class railway carriage. This austerity did not interfere with his daily massage. . . ."

In the concluding chapter the author says that, so long as the two great religions, Hinduism and Mohammedanism, remain antagonistic, India cannot take her place with other nations. "Until such time as some unity can be established, India must make up her mind to accept one of two conditions—the pressure of some power holding the balance between the two conflicting religions, or a bloody revolution which many leaders consider inevitable." (p. 365). As to the Brahmans, a prosperous India is contingent upon the destruction of their power: "This caste should be legitimately and gainfully employed. . . . In other words it should be forced to do a job of work."

The author says some useful things, but it is doubtful whether a book written in this spirit, in unbalance and hostility, can contribute towards understanding and the improvement of world relationships.

GEORGE W. BRIGGS

And Gazelles Leaping. By SUDHIN N. GHOSE. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949. 238 pp. $3.50.

The author is a trained correspondent. His fine ability to report significant detail can be adequately appreciated only by one who knows the great sprawling city of which he writes, with the tiny village within its bounds that has remained a bit of heaven because a Rani loved children and animals and left certain provisions in her will.

Men from every corner of India and from without her boundaries are to be found in Calcutta. At Svenska Bibi's kindergarten, which is in the heavenly village, their children and the children's pets play and grow and work and are happy. Mixture of races and religions troubles them not at all. And from the mouths of the postman, the blacksmith, the bookbinder, the washerwoman, and the visiting saint they are schooled in the wisdom of India's past ages.

Evil from the city attacks the village, and the story of the child who conquers fear is dark with tragedy and bright with beauty.

The lovely illustrations bring to mind Alice's famous comment, "What is a book without pictures?"

MARY H. BRIGGS

Story without End: An Informal History of the Jewish People. By Solomon Landman and Benjamin Efron. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1949. 279 pp. $3.00.

With the admission of the state of Israel to the United Nations, a new heightening of interest in the Jewish people, its religious tradition, its history and destiny, has become wide-spread. Looking backward from this unique historical incident of an ancient people being restored to its homeland, many individuals become aware of the gap of information with regard to the two millenia that have passed since the destruction of the second commonwealth in A.D. 70 and the dispersion of the Jewish people to every corner of the civilized world. There were those who thought that, during this "gypsy" era when the Jew was the flotsam and jetsam of world history, there was no history of consequence to the general stream of events. Only two centuries have passed since the historical writings of Basnage, the researches of Graetz and Dubnow, and other great scholars have corrected this false impression. There was and remains, however, a need for the popularly written survey to supplement these scholarly works. This work is an attempt to meet this demand.

The reader should always keep in mind that this is merely a "headline" survey. Its intent is to serve as an introduction to the broad sweep and wealth of material that flows from the 4,000 years of recorded history of the Jew. Within the scope of its original purpose of serving as a text-book in the curriculum of the Religious School of Temple Isaiah in Kew Gardens, New York, this brief summary is valuable in outlining the stream of Jewish experience, the emergence of the heritage of Israel, the unswerving loyalty of the Jew to his tradition, the tragic experience of Hitlerism, and the renaissance in modern Israel. The book serves the useful function of opening for the newcomer to Jewish history a record "stranger than fiction."

Albert G. Silverman

The Purim Anthology. By Philip Goodman. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1949. xxxi, 525 pp. $4.00.

The festival of Purim, like that of Hanukkah, has a place of peculiar interest in the Jewish calendar. It is not endowed with the superior sanctity of the awesome high holy days, New Year and the Day of Atonement; it has not the sanction of antiquity, the Mosaic stamp, of the three festivals of pilgrimage. It is purely and simply a day of rejoicing for a deliverance in relatively recent times. Furthermore, it is a festival of the Diaspora; the story of its origin is laid not in the Holy Land but in Persia. Pre-eminently among the Jewish festivals it is the children's holiday, a day for the exchange of gifts, and for special toys and noisemakers. It is almost entirely lacking in tragic overtones; there is no tear behind its laughter.

Many local customs have grown up in different parts of the world to supplement the formal synagogue observance of the day. Rabbi Goodman has tapped

this rich vein to produce *The Purim Anthology*. No summary can do adequate justice to the many variations on the Purim theme which are presented here. The editor has done a fine piece of work.

Special notice should be taken of three of the sections written for this volume by co-operating authorities: A. W. Binder's "Purim in Music," Rachel Wischnitzer's "Esther Story in Art," and Jacob Shatzky's "The History of Purim Plays." These articles, in addition to their contribution to the total picture formed by the whole volume, have the special function of stressing the too infrequently recognized fact that the creativity of the Jewish artist in the emancipated world of today is continuous with that of earlier periods of Jewish culture. The many illustrations in *The Purim Anthology* confirm the fact that there has always been an esthetic aspect of Jewish life.

J.L.B.

The Zionist Idea. By Joseph Heller. New York: Schocken Books, 1949. 246 pp. $3.00.

This is a modest book on a big theme. There has, of course, been no dearth of books in recent years on the subject of Palestine. Journalists have given their impressions of its life and their eye-witness stories of current developments; statesmen have given us behind-the-scenes views of the circumstances attending the birth of the state of Israel. This, however, is the first book to bring to the general reader a survey of the ideas and philosophy behind the momentous events of recent years.

The author starts from scratch, lays his foundations and proceeds to build a logical structure. He first develops a theory of nationalism, analyzes the Jewish problem in relation to this theory, and thus leads into the Zionist idea. He does not attempt to present a new theory of Zionism. What he does is to summarize Zionist thinking of the past and formulate a Zionist rationale for the present. The book is thus both a miniature encyclopedia for the student of the intellectual background of the movement and a propaganda pamphlet for its followers. It combines information and apologetics.

It is obviously a timely book which meets a sorely felt need. The establishment of the state of Israel necessitates a rethinking of the Jewish problem by Jews and non-Jews alike, and a re-evaluation of the Zionist idea by Zionists and non-Zionists alike. This book can help in that rethinking and re-evaluation. It gives information which will correct certain common misconceptions and ammunition with which the Zionist can defend his position. The author points out, for instance, that the word nation can be used in two senses: first, "to denote an organized society united under a central government and constituting an inherent element of the state"; and second, "to denote a community which has distinct ethnical and cultural characteristics that constitute it a distinct ethnical and cultural group unit." While the word might apply in its first sense to the people in Israel, it is only in its latter sense that it has any meaning ap-

plied to the Jews of America. The charge of "dual allegiance," as a product of Jewish nationalism, fear of which has haunted certain small but articulate Jewish groups, is essentially a result of confusion in the application of the word nationalism to Jewish life.

Secondly, the book brings into sharp relief the fact that the Jewish state is not an accident of contemporary history, not solely an outgrowth of recent international affairs. Its roots are shown to be deep in the soil of Jewish tradition, life, and thought. It is the fruit of Jewish destiny: the end result of forces within the Jewish people, and the fulfillment of their age-old aspirations. External forces have been able to impede or accelerate its achievement. They did not create nor could they destroy the idea. From this it becomes clear, also, that "Zionism is more than a variety of modern nationalism applied to Jews. The creation of the State of Israel does not complete the Zionist program. It makes possible the broader program of the renascence of Judaism and Jewish values" (p. 224).

Since the intentions of the book are so commendable, it is regrettable that one must point out some obvious defects which mar its effectiveness. While the book-jacket describes it as a "clear and succinct exposition," the reviewer found the style pedestrian and sometimes patently clumsy. Moreover, its compact form often required the telescoping of large areas of thought into a few sentences. As a result the logic is sometimes shaky. Statements in themselves controversial are sometimes stated as facts. Conclusions are sometimes reached which may be valid, but which would require further elucidation and proof for the uninitiated and objective reader. Finally the book leaves an impression of being dated. It was originally published in England in 1947 and has now been rewritten by the author for American publication, taking into cognizance the establishment of the Jewish state. In many cases, however, the rewriting seems to have consisted of tacking a final sentence to a paragraph left in its original form.

The book will have its greatest usefulness as a means of strengthening the contemporary Zionist in his convictions, the purpose for which very likely it was originally intended. For all readers, the information it contains and the mental stimulation it will afford are of sufficient value to outweigh its limitations.

HAROLD I. SAPERSTEIN

The Purpose of the Gospels. By ERNEST F. SCOTT. New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1949. Pp. vii, 171. $2.50.

Dr. Scott has written another book—this time on the Gospels. One of the most prolific writers in his field and one of the most influential teachers of the New Testament in America, Dr. Scott has made another contribution to the thought of his countless students comprising, as they do, several generations.

The title accurately indicates the purpose of the book—that is to say, it is an attempt to get at *a* main reason why the Gospels were written. Throughout, the book deals with the four Gospels as a unit, which, from the point of view of the

reviewer, is a drawback of some import; but the author, true to his custom, never deviates from the question with which he is dealing.

Perhaps an indication of the author's line of thought would be in order. Dr. Scott begins by saying that, after St. Paul's time, the Church found itself in danger of "reaching down from facts to principles" (p. 15), and of preaching the Gospel in terminology that was becoming more and more abstract. Thus Paul had "left too much of an impression that the doctrines were themselves the substance of Christianity," and "in the period which followed his death, and to a great extent ever since, the theological interest overshadowed all others. Faith attached itself to ideas and not to realities" (p. 16). (Dr. Scott's philosophical presuppositions are here made clear.)

The thesis of this book, then, is that the purpose of the Gospels was to undergird the Church's doctrine with historical data about Jesus Christ, who "had taught no theology but had pointed men to a new way of living and made it plain by his own example" (p. 22). One might almost say, on the basis of this statement, that the Gospels were written by the more "liberal" theologians of the first century in opposition to the purely doctrinal, "orthodox" tendencies of those whose groundwork had been laid by St. Paul. To continue, Dr. Scott writes that "the Christian position can be undermined if doubts can be thrown on our record of" Christ (p. 26). Christianity is significant because its message is derived from and concerns an historical person.

> There have been thinkers in all times who sought to detach the Christian message from its historical frame-work, believing that in this way they would secure its permanence. Jesus may or may not have lived, but his name represents to us love and goodness and the fellowship with God, and these are eternal things. It is our confidence in these, and not in certain past events, which makes us Christians. But when Christianity is separated from historical fact it is deprived of just the thing that is essential. The highest ideals can mean little to us when they are only ideals, and we have no assurance that they correspond with any reality. So long as they exist only in our own minds they are unsubstantial. . . . Events may be transitory, but we can say to ourselves, "This thing has actually been." We have something to lay hold of, and without this sense of certainty there can be no genuine faith (pp. 152-53).

This emphasis is very welcome, but one is inclined to suspect that it is more à propos our present situation than that of the first century. It would seem quite unlikely that the first century Church, at any point, was minimizing the absolute significance of the historical Jesus for Christian faith. It is hard, then, to believe that the primary purpose for the writing of the Gospels—all four of them—was to bring the first century Christians back to a right understanding of the importance of Jesus for their faith. Rather than say, as does Dr. Scott, that the purpose of the Gospels was to supply historical data to a Church which, under the influence of St. Paul's theology, had lost track of the significance of this data, one would like to suggest that the Gospels are really as theological as the Epistles, but use a quite different literary method which sometimes obscure their theological interest. All this, however, is not to minimize one's grate-

fulness for Professor Scott's major emphasis in his new book, and for his innumerable philosophical insights, which occur here as in all his writings.

BURTON THROCKMORTON

The Age of Constantine the Great. By JACOB BURCKHARDT. Translated by MOSES HADAS. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1949. 400 pp. $4.50.

This volume, although written some seventy years ago, still is well deserving of translation, for it is an attempt to picture the world at the moment when Christianity became supreme. It includes a broad synopsis of the contents of the last stages of paganism, religiously and morally. The author pictures the religious world which Christianity had to overcome, and he works in the same broad way as he does with the political and other cultural aspects. He is a sharp critic of the Christian historians, such as Eusebius, for he does not believe that Constantine was ever a sincere Christian. Unfortunately, his general picture of Christianity at the moment when it became the world religion of the Roman Empire is not so clear as his view of the paganism which it supplanted. Yet he does not hesitate to declare that the strength of the new religion lay in its emphasis upon personal immortality and its system, although he does not make clear exactly what that was.

C.A.M.

The "De Primo Principio" of John Duns Scotus. A revised text and translation by EVANS ROCHE, O. F. M. St. Bonaventure, New York: Franciscan Institute, 1949. xvii, 153 pp.

The need for a good text of this, one of the most important treatises of Duns Scotus, has long been evident, a need now admirably satisfied by the publication of the present volume. In it, Duns Scotus sets forth a subtle and penetrating argument for the existence of an infinite and incausable being. The conclusion depends principally on the establishment that an infinite series of essentially ordered causes is impossible. This is shown, in Chapter 3, by making the fundamentally important distinction between a series of essentially ordered causes and that of accidentally ordered causes. The former has three characteristics: in such a series, the preceding cause is the necessary condition of the casual efficacy of the following cause; the single causes in such a series are not only numerically different but essentially different; all causes in such a series must simultaneously co-operate to produce the last cause, that is, in their totality they constitute a sufficient reason. If this is true of an essentially ordered series, there must be something simply first and hence incausable in the series. In the succeeding chapters, Duns Scotus proceeds to establish the simplicity and infinity of this first being.

Fr. Roche makes it happily evident in his translation of Chapter 3 that the argument proceeds first in the order of possibility. The treatise deserves a careful study by all concerned with medieval philosophy.

J. R. CRESSWELL

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